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## The Week

THE situation in China continues to be of the most critically dangerous character. It is still possible for the Powers, if they will act promptly, in unison and in a reasonable and conciliatory spirit, to effect an understanding with the Chinese leaders which will at any rate provide a breathing spell during which the principles of a permanent settlement can be worked out. The danger is, however, that before even a temporary action is achieved, open fighting in Canton, Hongkong, Shanghai or elsewhere may result in the deaths of a number of Europeans, and produce a situation where the pressure on the Powers to declare war will be—or will seem to the officials—irresistible.

FRANCE has at last ratified the Washington treaties of 1921, after a four-year delay which now seems little less than criminal, in view of its consequences. It is finally possible to hold the conference to discuss customs, for which the Washington Conference of 1921 provided. The United States wishes to have both this conference and one on the other vexed questions such as extra-territoriality, held and has sounded out the Powers in regard to their attitude. The chief stumbling block both to the holding of such conferences and their success if held, is the conduct of the present British government. The Baldwin policy in China is modeled on the policy in India which in recent years has managed to bring the latter country to the verge of open rebellion. It is to treat the Chinese as "natives" who are beneath consideration, and to "use a firm hand on 'em from the start." A typical example of this policy is the attitude of Sir Reginald Stubbs, head of the Hongkong government, who has announced that all Chinese strike agitators who are caught will be flogged, every unemployed adult deported, and those who are now in jail will be used for scavenger work, "in the course of which," says a news dispatch significantly, "the government probably will make them regret their activities." Evidence as to how representatives of other nations in China regard the British policy is found in the report of the diplomatic corps in Peking, which has apparently not yet reached England or America though it has been published widely in Japan. This report puts the blame for the serious situation which developed in Shanghai squarely on the British attitude and actions.

IT IS widely believed in China that England and Japan have reached a new secret understanding by which the British have agreed to underwrite strong action by Japan. Chang Tso-lin, the Manchurian war lord, has long been hand in glove with the Japanese; and the story is that his assistance to the new coalition has been bought by a large "loan." It is pointed out in support of this theory that Chang Tso-lin has issued orders to suppress strike agitation in the territory under his control. Such an understanding between Great Britain and Japan as is indicated would, of course, be a violation of the treaties growing out of the Washington Conference, which were a substitute for the Anglo-Japanese alliance; and the British government has denied that any new treaty has been entered into. Evidently to offset this story, and to conceal the fact of disagreement, we are now told that America, Great Britain and Japan have come to an arrangement for continuance of the present policy. Great Britain, it is said, has consented to the discharge of her representatives in Shanghai, whose conduct is criticized in the report of the Peking diplomatic corps. In return, America has consented not to


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move too hastily in the matter of the abolition of extra-territoriality. Meanwhile, Secretary Kellogg after conferring with President Coolidge has issued a statement that we intend to stand by the provisions of the lately ratified treaties, and shall demand that the Chinese government protect the lives and property of foreigners. It is hardly necessary to say that even if the reports of a three-power agreement are correct, the real division between the British policy and that of all the other Powers continues; and that while it does, no permanent or satisfactory solution of the whole Chinese question is possible.

THE situation in China is an enormously complicated and difficult one. Even if the Western Powers should exercise both intelligence and good will to a high degree, as they have never yet done in their history, it would still take many years to settle the series of problems which their own past policies, plus the weaknesses of the Chinese political system, have brought about. The present anti-foreign movement in China is only very partially due to Russian communist propaganda as such. Competent observers declare that far stronger than the influence of Marxian theories has been the sheer example of the Soviet government of Russia, which voluntarily renounced all the rights and privileges in China which, as it said, had been unjustly obtained by the Tsar. Not one of the Western Powers has ever done anything of this sort, though Germany and Austria have followed Russia to the extent of renouncing extra-territoriality. The attitude of the Powers toward China is slightly reminiscent of the bully who observed to his wife: "Why ain't you lovin' and grateful to me? Look at all the beautiful black eyes I have given you!"

THE present problem, of course, is complicated by numerous factors. There is an anti-Christian movement in China; the country's national government is but a pretense, the real power being in the hands of the provincial military governors who are hardly more than bandit chiefs. The resentment toward the foreigner, however, is shared by all Chinese, of whatever religious or political affiliation. The long list of grievances from which it rises goes back eighty-five years, and is based upon injustices which are political, economic and above all, social. As in the case of India, a time has been when comparatively slight concessions might have secured a long period of peace. But the brutal and arrogant policy of the British in India, which has brought that country to a state where compromise is well-nigh impossible, is producing identical results when followed by the British and others in China. The Powers will either have to fight a long and expensive war against a country which is too big to be policed and has no government which is in a position to make peace, or they must give up a far larger share of their special privileges than would have been the case a few years ago; and must face the prospect that China will continue to demand more freedom, as more is yielded to her, until she has attained the same degree of which we proudly boast as our own heritage.

SOVIET "meddling" in the affairs of China is producing a reaction which runs half-way around the world. The British and French governments are displaying such fresh and vigorous hostility toward Russia, that the press of the latter country declares a new "holy war" of capitalism is in prospect against her. The list of grievances is extensive: Russian communist propaganda in England, in Morocco, in the Near East, in India and along her northern border, and of course throughout China. While the formal British recognition of Russia by the Labor government continues in force, it now means nothing and is likely to be revoked at almost any time. The Russians have but one card to play against all this, but that one is an ace. Russia's imports, which are now bought through a single governmental agency, are already enormous and rapidly growing. If Great Britain wants her share of these orders, she must continue on friendly terms. The recent flare-up in the House of Commons over the Russians' bad behavior was promptly followed by M. Rakovsky, arriving posthaste from Moscow and waving around his head orders for $78,000,000 worth of goods. Such strategy is crude, but just now terribly effective.

FOR the truth is, the British Isles are in a most serious economic plight, and no relief seems to be in prospect. The number of unemployed continues to be above 1,250,000. Foreign trade is suffering badly, imports for the first six months of the present year showing a large increase, while exports have dropped off. This is particularly true of the coal trade, which shows a decrease compared to last year of 5,000,000 tons. A variety of causes is responsible: increased production by French mines, underselling by the United States, whose machine methods make the output per miner very much larger, increasing competition by oil, and the development of great hydro-electric projects, in Italy and elsewhere. British coal producers claim that their costs of production are too high, to which the miners retort that they cannot be reduced without forcing the workmen below the endurable minimum standard of living. As it is, 200,000 coal miners are out of work.

THE British operators, as our readers will remember, gave a month's notice, which terminates on August 1, of their determination to increase the working day from seven to eight hours and to reduce wages. Thus far, the miners have absolutely refused to consider such action, and a strike seems even more likely in Great Britain than in the United States. The miners are attempting, as they have done before, to create a giant coalition with the

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shipbuilders and railroad workers (the latter also threatened by a wage cut), so that if the men cease work, what will follow will be virtually a general strike, with "not a wheel turning in Great Britain." In the past, such efforts have been only partially successful; but indications are that this time the chance is better than ever before. It is indeed a serious outlook.

BRYAN for President, on a platform which will demand that the compulsory study of the Bible in schools shall be made a part of the Constitution! That is the cheerful threat which the Great Commoner and Commoner held out in one of his early speeches at Dayton, Tenn., where, as we go to press, he is still engaged in battling earnestly for organized ignorance, superstition and tyranny. Brother Bryan has done us a service for which our most hearty thanks. He has come out honestly and stated the wish which lurks in the hearts of many of his fundamentalist brethren who have been too timid, or too discreet to utter it. He has illuminated vividly for the rest of us the essentially bigoted position of himself and his followers, and the degree of religious intolerance which they will undoubtedly enforce upon the country if they ever get the chance.

TO BE sure, the implied menace to real American principles and policies which lurks behind Bryanism is something which cannot be taken lightly. He appeals to the same group of ideas and desires which was responsible for the extraordinary success of the Ku Klux Klan in all parts of the country, North as well as South. If Bryan could succeed in making the religious issue the central one in a national political campaign, if he could persuade the people that the choice between himself and another candidate was the choice between God-fearing morality, industry and sobriety on one side and atheism and immorality on the other, he might succeed in breaking party lines and securing a majority of the popular vote in a large number of states. Fundamentalism in the past has not been vocal; it has, for natural reasons, failed to get control of the organs of national public opinion; and for that reason most persons in the large cities, especially in the East, have failed to realize its continuing, deep-rooted strength. The present activity of the Bryanites is, in our judgment, the beginning of the end for them. The enormous popularity of the state universities in recent years, coupled with other factors for the enlightenment and disillusionment of the rising generation, have sounded the death knell of fundamentalism. No one should be surprised, however, if in its dying struggle it exhibited, for a few years, an appalling degree of energy.

MEANWHILE, the trial of unlucky young Mr. Scopes has been going forward with the circus atmosphere unabated. One has to go back to the Leopold-Loeb case or the Harry Thaw affair to find a parallel for the extraordinary amount of space which is being given to the subject in the daily press. Each day's journals offer fresh confirmation of the miraculous ability of the star men to write several thousand words, whether there is anything to write about or not. No minister now dares preach on any other subject; travelers returned from Europe are giving interviews on it instead of the Dawes plan; any Sunday editor would commit suicide if he found he had been careless enough to go to press without an article explaining Darwinism in words of one syllable, accompanied by photographs from the American Museum of Natural History. Dean Busby of the Columbia School of Pharmacy wants institutions of higher learning to disregard degrees obtained in states where evolution is banned; the only minister in Dayton who was willing to have a pro-evolution sermon preached from his pulpit is forced to resign, after his indignant parishioners threatened to wreck the church if the sermon were delivered. The European press comments unanimously and with glee on the horrendous spectacle America is making of herself. As usual, it is assumed that the fundamentalists represent the whole country; and as usual, the fact is ignored that every European population has in its midst a fundamentalist majority quite as large or larger than our own. The only difference is that in America its members read and write, ride in automobiles—and vote.

THERE was a time when midsummer was proverbially a slack period in which editors worried about finding sufficient news with which to fill their columns. Them days, in the words of the comic strip, is gone forever. In the week just past, for example, the harassed journalists have had to struggle with near-war in China and real war in Dayton, Tenn. New York State has been thrown into confusion by a court decision invalidating a recent home rule amendment to the state constitution under which a number of municipalities have engaged in scores of enterprises and expended millions of dollars. A vast experiment in coöperative marketing of grain has broken down, largely through failure of the farmers to buy the stock which was to provide capital for the merger of the leading grain selling organizations. France has at last been forced to admit that Abd-el-Krim has won the war in Morocco. In company with Spain, she is suing for peace on terms which she describes as "most generous" and if Abd-el-Krim rejects them, says M. Malvy, darkly, France will begin "a real war" against him—a statement which is certainly the funniest thing in the week's news.

BERNARD M. BARUCH has made a gift of $250,000 to the Walter Hines Page School of International Relations for a study of war profiteering as a cause of war, and the possibility of preserving

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peace by abolishing it. The National League of Women Voters promptly catches the tail of Mr. Baruch's kite with a demand that women be permitted to study in the School. From Santa Barbara comes the news that although that handsome city was known to be in a dangerous earthquake zone, much of the building done there in recent years had ignored the earthquake risk and thereby added to the needless loss of life. In England and America coal strikes are looming on the horizon; while in the former country, as we have noted, the Baldwin government is torn between the desire to fight the Bolsheviki, whose propaganda is so embarrassing to British interests throughout Asia, and the urgent desire to sell goods to Moscow. Any newspaper editor, surveying this floodtide of news, must be driven to the rueful wish that some sort of allocation system could be invented whereby we should have one important happening a week, instead of using up a six months' supply in a fortnight.

AS our readers are well aware, the movement to promote international peace has suffered, in America, because of differences of opinion within its ranks. One important group has advocated the outlawry of war, opposing the League of Nations as perpetuating the sins of the Treaty of Versailles, and the Permanent Court of Justice as being only a back door into the League. Another group, while regarding the outlawry of war as a desirable ultimate ideal, has believed it to be impossible to obtain, in the present international situation. This group at first advocated America's entrance into the League, and when they saw that this was hopeless, at least for a long time to come, centered attention on joining the World Court under the Harding-Hughes reservations. In the presence of such division of opinion among the leaders, it is but natural that the rank and file should be puzzled and disheartened, since as is usually the case, the chief protagonists on both sides have devoted more energy to attacking their opponents than to stressing the important ideal which they have in common.

WE are glad to announce that a successful effort at conciliation has now been made, and a common program decided upon by most of the chief figures in the opposing camps. The plan which has their approval is that the United States should join the World Court under the Harding-Hughes reservations, with the understanding that within two years thereafter, a conference of the European nations will be called for the purpose of outlawing war as a legal method of settling international disputes. Based on this principle, a code of "the international law of peace" is to be formulated and adopted, and under it the World Court is to be granted affirmative jurisdiction over international controversies between sovereign nations. If the nations should fail to agree to all this and summon the conference within two years after the United States has joined the Court, this country may at its discretion withdraw its adherence to the Court Protocol. If, within another three years, making five in all, the nations have failed to "make and execute a general treaty" embodying these principles in substance, the adherence of the United States is to terminate.

THE New Republic heartily endorses the plan outlined above. It has long believed that war ought to be outlawed and has supported the proposal for the United States to enter the World Court. Honesty compels us to add, however, that the prospect of immediate success for the new proposal, or indeed for either of its chief parts separately, seems to us so slight as to be altogether negligible. Any experienced political observer will agree that the fresh suggestion has rather less chance of securing the favor of people, Congress and the President, than the simple proposal for adherence to the Court under the Harding-Hughes reservations. Yet even the latter project, as our Washington correspondent has lately pointed out, will not be adopted unless President Coolidge exerts himself to an extraordinary degree. And there are no indications either that he feels deeply about the policy, or that, however fervent the state of his feelings, he is temperamentally capable of taking the drastic measures required.

## Tennessee vs. Civilization

IN the case of Tennessee versus Scopes the sympathy of the world very naturally goes out to Scopes. That is likely to be the case whenever an individual is attacked in the courts by a state, even when that individual is acknowledged to be a "bad man," as Gerald Chapman, for instance, was. But Scopes is not a bad man. He is a humble citizen, a young man, a public school teacher—presumably without any considerable resources of wealth or influence. Furthermore and chiefly the misdemeanor of which he admits that he is guilty is not only not regarded as a vice in other parts of the world; it is positively a virtue, an ideal, a mission: the dissemination of knowledge. For these reasons the civilized world will regard this prosecution of a teacher accused of trafficking with evolution as a melodrama in which the hero is the defendant and the villain the prosecutor. But that is a mistake. This is not a melodrama. It is a tragedy of human weakness in the presence of inexorable fate, and the victim of the tragedy is the Sovereign State of Tennessee.

To perceive the nature of this tragedy it is necessary to note first of all that Tennessee was, spiritually, if not legally, altogether within its rights when it chose to forbid instruction in its own schools in evolution. The doctrine of religious toleration has never extended to the point of robbing a state of the power to regulate public instruction.

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Is an American public school teacher free to substitute the Koran for the Bible in his morning exercises? Does the individual teacher decide whether he will conduct religious exercises in his schoolroom, whether he will read to his charges from the Bible or refrain from reading? Not in the least. Such things are everywhere determined by superior authority, seldom without violent argument, but always by general acknowledgment of the sovereign power of the state to regulate. Consider, then, that the State of Tennessee has forbidden the teaching of evolution in its public schools, that it has the right to make such a rule, and the power, presumably, to enforce it. Whereupon charges are preferred against one young man who is teaching elementary science in a town high school and coaching the athletic teams. What does this mean? Is evolution a high school subject? Certainly not. Are the high schools the source and wellspring of evolutionary thought? Certainly not. Will the dissemination of the evolutionary hypothesis in the state be effectively checked by the strictest statewide supervision of high school science courses? Certainly not. Why, then, has the state elected to prosecute a teacher of elementary science in a high school? Why have not the trustees, the president, and the entire zoölogy department of the state university been brought before the bar of justice?

Evolution is not taught in high schools. The only place where it is taught with any degree of effect is in the university or the college. But its employment there cannot be prevented. There is no way to prevent it, and if there were, to do so would be disastrous. The tragedy in the spectacle of the Sovereign State of Tennessee half-heartedly prosecuting an obscure youth for using a textbook that hints at evolution is the tragedy of impotence. For all its bigotry, Tennessee has neither a way nor the will to forbid instruction in biological science.

When Governor Peay signed the anti-evolution law he remarked in a blithe explanation of his assent that while the law intended to protect the sacred innocence of the Tennessean mind, and was so far excellent, it was too vague to be capable of specific application, and was therefore, apparently, twice blessed. This point was well taken. Nothing could be more difficult to forbid than the study of evolution. If you interdict that word in all its forms, the scientists will simply call their subject the study of "development," and be very grateful to you for making the use of the better word obligatory. If you rule out Darwinism both in name and in substance, the scientists will send you large bouquets. For years they have resented the disposition of the lay public to attach the whole of modern biology to the name of a single biologist who, though he was very great, neither began nor ended research into the development of species. Moreover, the specific contributions made by Darwin to biological theory have practically all been superseded. Everything of Darwin's that could be obliterated contemporary scientists would be very glad to get rid of.

If you take another tack and promulgate the Book of Genesis as the standard of truth and knowledge, your difficulties will be multiplied—first of all by two. The Book of Genesis will not bear scrutiny as a standard of true information. The application of the most ordinary sense to the account of creation given in its chapters will reveal that there are two accounts and that they by no means correspond with each other. Now it is possible to use Genesis, and the other books of the Old Testament, without being disturbed by the discrepancies between these, but it is not possible to make Genesis the legal standard of truth and still avoid this difficulty.

But even this is not the chief problem of those who may wish to make science adhere to Genesis. Scientists can escape dealing at all with creation, though they may not take to it with so good a grace. For this purpose it will be necessary only to substitute "analogy" for "development." The theory of the development of species is usually stated as a process of growth and change that has taken place in past time. But that is not necessary. The past time is an inference, and as an inference it can be dispensed with. Beyond history, past time is identified only by the aid of geologists, and measured only by the relative thickness of geological deposits. "Development" must be postulated as a hypothesis. But it need not be put forward as a fact. Indeed, it is not a fact in the same sense in which the earth and bones and flints are facts. No legislature can prohibit the existence of the earth and its contents. No legislature can prohibit the observed analogy of the embryonic forms of the various animals.

But to exclude such facts as these is the last thing anybody wants. Theoretically, it is possible for a man, or a state, to prefer the civilization of bygone days to his own. But practically, no one does and no one can. Modern civilization strikes some men as unromantic, others as unæsthetic, and still others as impious. But no one proposes on that account to do without its blessings. The University of Tennessee is just now developing its medical school very rapidly. Now medical schools are the fine flower of modern biological science. Evolution is their stock in trade, not as a theological alternative to Genesis nor even as a scientific hypothesis of the development of species, but in the form of the analogy between man and the animals. Medicine is the study of man as an animal. The training of doctors begins with at least two years of intensive experimental study of the anatomy and physiology of the higher mammals. Every time a doctor takes a Wassermann test he plays partners with a sheep. Every time he checks an epidemic by vaccinating the community he has the coöperation of various cows and horses.

Tennessee is not opposed to good medicine, but

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only to "bad" theology. Can these things be separated? That is what the anti-evolution law has attempted. But the experience of other states is not encouraging. Adherence to a religious faith in Genesis does not disqualify a man from studying and practicing medicine. As a matter of logic the two can be kept quite separate. That is why science has been able to grow upon the world: it has kept separate, rendering its conclusions only unto Cæsar. But science has flourished so greatly that it has at length become the chief power in modern civilization. Men accept it for the power it confers. In the end they cannot dispense with it. To do so now means to become a weak and backward state at the mercy of your neighbors. What now is the fate of Genesis? It has become one of the decorations of a life whose centre of gravity is elsewhere.

There are many men who state today that science does not interfere with their beliefs. Some of them are scientists. With considerable pride they announce from time to time that they are still able to credit the ancient traditions of our faith. Modernist theology is all of it a product of this state of mind. Such avowals are interesting but vague. Do they mean that their theology is now so nebulous that no further dissipation of it is conceivable? That may be the case. But if it is the case, there is an unpleasant suggestion of duplicity in the assertion that these are indeed the ancient traditions of our faith. Or do they really think that whatever changes may have followed the growth of science in the past, their beliefs can somehow be held intact? They will inform their minds but sanctify their hearts? If so, let them contemplate the predicament of the Sovereign State of Tennessee.

## Why the Church?

THE National Conference on the Christian Way of Life has recently published a small book of about one hundred pages entitled, Why the Church? The book contains a collection of questions which are intended to stimulate discussion among organized groups of church-goers as to the function, and particularly the social function, of the Church. The syllabus was prepared for the use of ordinary laymen, and the questions which it asks are, consequently, somewhat elementary. But they are not superficial; nor are they easily answered. Inasmuch as they were framed for the purpose of provoking inquiry, a negative or an affirmative ejaculation will not appease their demands. The members of any group which starts to discuss them, if they really try to devise satisfactory answers, will have to explore a large part of the long and checkered record of organized official Christianity. The book itself, apart from its questions, does not extend to them much assistance. It supplements the questionnaire with a few explanatory comments and a few relevant quotations from current writings. That is all. The authors have remained faithful to the method of instruction which a syllabus implies. They have not attempted to predispose their readers in favor of any particular theory of ecclesiastical activities.

The publication of a syllabus dealing inquisitively with a subject which is peculiarly sacred and not at all questionable to the majority of serious Christians suggests one preliminary doubt. By submitting questions about the function of the Church for organized discussion by lay Christians, what do the authors expect to accomplish? Is the purpose of their questionnaire analogous to that of the list of problems which is supplied to every school class in arithmetic, the answers to which are known and can be furnished on demand by the authorized teachers? Are the questions, that is, merely a pedagogical device for enabling laymen to find their own way to a preconceived goal of official religious incorrigibility? Or are they the expression of honest and serious scepticism about the function of the Church? Are they intended to encourage or to discourage systematic incredulity on the part of the Christians who try to answer them?

The book does not set forth answers either to its own questions or to the preceding cross-examination of itself. The group who prepared and published it belong to a Commission on the function of the Church in civil and social affairs of the National Conference on the Christian Way of Life. This Conference is inquiring whether Christian truth is capable of helping modern society, to an extent to which it has not helped previous societies, in dealing constructively with industrial, international and racial conflicts. And if so, how? As yet, unlike the corresponding Conference in England, (C.O. P.E.C.) it has not announced any group of salutary principles which need only to be applied in order to heal social disorders. The Commission on the social function of the Church has been no less circumspect in this respect than the parent body. It may have up its sleeve complete and authoritative answers to its questions, but if so it conceals them thoroughly. Apparently its real object is to stimulate inquiry rather than to lead the inquirers by a masked route to unimpeachable foregone conclusions.

But is not a certain group of conclusions already implied by the effort to stimulate inquiry among laymen as to the social or other functions of the Church? The authors of the book glance in passing at this difficulty. They say in their introduction: "Those who believe in the divine origin and the final authority of the Church may deem it superfluous, if not sacrilegious, to raise the question 'Why the Church?' " They think it sufficient to reply to these authoritarian objectors by admonishing them to remember "that many sincere seekers after truth can-

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not rest content with authority or tradition however venerable, but must examine claims and values for themselves." But from the point of view of the authoritarians this reply is irrelevant. If the Church is what the latter believe it to be, there is nothing to be gained by encouraging laymen to ask searching questions about its functions. The history of the Church properly interpreted answers all such questions, and the proper interpretation is a matter of clerical guidance. It is the business of laymen not to cultivate but to overcome doubts about the accepted conclusions. Those who encourage a radical spirit of inquiry among laymen as to the function of the Church encourage by implication a similar spirit of inquiry as to the nature of the Church, and, consequently, the fundamentals of Christianity. Is the Church a community whose members become more conscientious and lucid Christians by introducing an incredulous and sceptical spirit into the sanctuary of the Faith? Or is it a community whose vitality depends upon conscious loyalty on the part of its members to an official conception of the Church and of Christian truth and conscious submission to its accredited spokesmen?

The syllabus does not deal with these troublesome inquiries. It asks "Why the Church?" But it does not ask in a sufficiently thorough way the parent question—"What is the Church?" It defines the Church for the purpose of its discussion "as the aggregate members of the professed followers of Christ who find organized expression in general bodies (the separate communions) and in local congregations." In other words the Church is all the people who profess Christianity and who do not worship in solitude. No doubt this definition is convenient, but it is convenient because it avoids the fundamental difficulties of an attempt to introduce into the Christian life a thorough-going spirit of inquiry. A considerable majority of the Christian body would consider the application of the inquisitorial method to the foundations of the Church as necessarily destructive of Christian faith and Church unity. They would consider the Church as defined in this book meaninglessly eclectic. It could not have any reason for existence, because in any active sense it would not exist. It could not have any function, because it would not be sufficiently coherent to adopt decisions, to possess tendencies or try out methods of which it could be officially conscious.

For our part we fully understand why Christians of fundamentalist tendencies should flinch at the project of improving the serviceability of the Church by encouraging a spirit of incredulity as to its reason for existence. If this little book is really intended to vitalize the Church by cultivating in laymen sincere doubts about its existing functions and unifying principle, then it is likely to be a more radical and subversive document than its authors imagine. They have adopted, from the point of view of the traditional Christian, not merely a hazardous but a revolutionary way of persuading laymen to take more interest in the Church and to live more as Christians should. They are inviting the churchgoer to confirm his allegiance to the Church and to coöperate with its activities by the route—not of faith or obedience nor of authoritatively instructed conviction—but of systematic, public and honest doubt. If the word heresy still has any meaning in relation to Christian opinion, the invitation and suggestion are essentially and damnably heretical.

In our opinion such an invitation is essentially heretical. It is worth accepting and pursuing chiefly because it *does* propose to leaven Christianity by introducing heresy into the sanctuary of the Faith. We only wish that the heterodoxy were franker and more thorough-going. After centuries of orthodoxy and theoretical indivisibility, and after further centuries of dissidence and schism whose manifestations straightway assumed the purple robes of new orthodoxies and new cities of God, a large dose of thorough-going doubt may well be the purge which the Christian Church needs in order to recover its vitality. This book is, we hope, a symptom of repentance—the beginning of a spiritual revolt against the cultivated self-satisfaction and confidence in authority which has been the traditional prepossession of organized Christianity. Whatever justification there has been in the past for this self-confidence, there is no justification for it now.

The Christian Church is engaged at present in the most dangerous and seductive of all ways of killing time. It is blindly and helplessly sliding down hill towards some valley of unknown decision. Many of its leaders fool themselves into believing that the gathering momentum of its downward course is a sign of increasing power. It is only a sign of increasing subjugation to common scruples and apprehensions. The Church operates on the strength of its enormous prestige and on the automatic impulse of its traditions, catchwords and institutions. Yet its fabric is thoroughly moth-eaten with doubt, with unrest, with dissatisfaction and with spiritual self-deception. It is living not on a faith which really affirms nor on a service which fulfills but on various experimental subterfuges for them. It is spending, or at least watering, its capital, and is shutting its eyes to the process. It cannot remain orthodox no matter how ingeniously and desperately it tries. It has lost the power of achieving unity of belief. It is fatally heterodox. Yet it does not know how to transfigure heresy and convert it into a source of strength in life and a means of Christian unity and grace.

If the Church is ever frankly to face the irretrievable fact of internal heresy and accept the consequences thereof, it must begin, as this book does, by asking radical questions of its own members; and it must ask questions not as a roundabout route to a preconceived answer, but as a humble confession that the Christian ministry does not know what the answers are. They are in effect issuing an ap-

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peal for help to the Christian laymen. Their assumption has always been that they, as the accredited organs or spokesmen of the Church, had obtained access to some special revelation of the truth about which the less enlightened Christians needed to be instructed. This truth was salutary for laymen in so far as they believed in it and obeyed its instructions. The minister in and out of the pulpit was occupied chiefly with taking care that these instructions were persuasively communicated to the laymen, and were accepted and obeyed. The layman was not encouraged even in the Protestant churches to earn his belief either in the doctrine or in the church organization and discipline by passing through any process of preliminary incredulity. Faith was presumed. The result in belief, not the personal process or method whereby it was reached, was the salutary part of the transaction.

At the time when these traditions and assumptions originated there was much to be said in their favor. Truth was then conceived as an ascertained substance which communicated its virtue by being believed and which conferred a kind of authority on its accredited purveyor to which the uninitiated must submit. But those days are over. Truth is now increasingly conceived as an approximation. If it is not understood as an approximation, it soon turns sour. Only those human minds which regard its provisional achievements with conscious incredulity are capable of adding to its treasures. Scepticism comes to have an indispensable function both in achieving and in transcending these provisional stopping places on the route to increasing understanding. Incredulity is as necessary to religion as it is to science. The fact that the Christian Church is not alive to its antiseptic virtues is chiefly responsible for its increasing loss of spiritual authority. The older conception of truth to which the churchmen cling encouraged complacency, rigidity and inertia on their part. It justified them in cultivating credulity and passivity in the attitude of Christian laymen towards Christianity. On the other hand the conception of the truth and particularly of religious truth as something eventual rather than final which exists only in so far as it is realized and reaffirmed by the activities of individual Christian consciences—this alternative conception will demand of the Christian ministry an increase of both mental and moral energy. It will then be their business as Christian ministers to proclaim the impiety of dogmatic slumber and to see that Christian laymen participate in this increase in intellectual and moral energy and to convert the Church itself into an association for adult religious education.

We hope, consequently, that the Christian clergy will adopt this practice of cross-examining themselves and their Christian laymen unscrupulously and fearlessly. The Church needs for its own salvation to set up a new inquisition—an inquisition not for the purpose of discovering and punishing heterodoxy, but as a demonstration of the improved quality of religious education which will come from substituting for the present authoritative instruction in belief a sceptical search for increasing understanding. Scepticism in this sense is not, as the Christian clergy have tended to believe, the spirit which denies. It is the spirit which affirms by conscious methodical exploration. It realizes itself in the increasing consciousness of activities and events. Its enemies are self-satisfaction, inattention, inflexibility, automatism and unconsciousness. It demands of the Christian more than anything else vigilant, indefatigable and comprehensive attention to the conduct of the world and his own individual affairs. If they respond, it will tend to remove the barriers which have prevented Christians from obtaining from their religion trustworthy instruction in the art of living. For this reason it is significant that this little movement towards the revival of the inquisition as a means of cultivating salutary neterodoxy has originated, not with the officials of any denominational church, but with an undenominational Conference on Christianity as a Way of Life.

## Caillaux's Wizardry

WHEN Caillaux became finance minister, French dispatches attempted to create an atmosphere of confidence by referring to him as a "financial wizard." Those who had carefully studied the French fiscal situation must have smiled at this burst of spirits, though they held their peace. For it did not take second sight to see what the trouble was, or financial magic to rectify it. The difficulty was not so much in knowing the facts as in getting the French people to accept and act upon the facts. The kind of wizardry needed was not so much economic as political. And so the informed waited to see what Caillaux would do, feeling that just possibly his popular reputation would induce the French public to swallow the pill often prescribed by others, but never taken.

Without referring in detail to the oft-cited figures, the situation facing him may roughly be summarized. In spite of many evasions and subterfuges, the French budget had not been really balanced since the War. Expenses regularly ran higher than current income. The deficits were met partly by advances of currency from the Bank of France, partly by continually increasing bond issues. The enlargement of currency and the growing total of bonds—which formed a basis of expansion in both credit and currency—rapidly inflated prices. The difficulties of the government therefore spiraled upward. Its expenses increased with the price advances, its interest charges grew with loans, and it was faced by the constant temptation—if not the necessity—of resorting to further loans and more inflation, in order to carry on. The end of such a process, as we have seen in Germany, can only be the complete bankruptcy of the government, the

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devaluation of its debt, and the passing of its old currency out of circulation.

There is no way to stop such a fatal progression short of its goal except by a real balance of the budget, so that current expenses, including interest charges, can be met out of current receipts from taxation and the like, without further borrowing. That sounds like a simple prescription, but it is bitter to the taste. It is particularly bitter to the French. For it involves, first, the admission that reparations receipts are likely to be so much smaller than they had been led to expect that no further credits can be based on future German payments, and thus that the plan of "making Germany pay" for the sacrifices of the War was a sham; second, the drastic curtailment of expenses not only for military and diplomatic objectives but for pensions, reconstruction and ordinary salaries of the large civil service and the army; third, the increase of taxation, particularly of income taxation, to which the French have never taken as kindly even as the British or the Americans; fourth, the admission that the franc can never be brought back to the pre-war par, but must be stabilized at somewhere near its present value, so that the great numbers of government bondholders must accept payment in a sorely depreciated currency.

No French government would undertake these unpleasant tasks until the situation became acute. The attempt to begin them helped to destroy in succession Poincaré and Herriot. When Painlevé and Caillaux took hold, the trouble had been further aggravated by the fact that many bondholders had begun to lose confidence in the future, and when their securities matured they insisted on being paid in currency instead of in refunding issues. And any disturbances in the exchange led to new "flights of capital" abroad, thus further depressing the franc. In addition, the government was faced by the necessity of dealing with enormous maturities of short-term bonds during the coming months. The edge of the precipice was near.

Caillaux's most pressing problem was to make plans for those maturities. This he has done by an ingenious démarche. Let us authorize, he said, a large, but a final increase in currency, to be applied not to current expenses, but to the retirement of as many of the short-term bonds as have to be paid off in cash. That looks like more inflation, but really it is not. For outstanding bonds and currency in circulation are, both of them, foundations of the means of payment, and if you enlarge currency only to retire bonds you do not inflate.

Let us also make plans to consolidate and fund the national debt on a gold basis—that is, let us assure those who accept the refunding issue that no matter what happens to the franc, their interest and principal will be paid in currency worth a certain amount of gold. This will at once give the bondholders an assurance against further depreciation, and will remove from the government the temptation to further inflation. For if the bonds are assured an interest, say, of four francs per hundred at the gold value of the franc when they are issued, and the government by inflation forces the franc down so that it takes five paper francs to buy as much gold as four formerly bought, the government will have to pay the bondholders an interest of five francs per hundred instead of four, and on maturity a principal of 125 instead of 100. It cannot, therefore, escape its debt burden by inflating. Then we can say to holders of maturing bonds: take currency if you like, but there is no point in taking it, because if you accept refunding bonds their gold value is guaranteed. The result may easily be that we shall not have to use much of our authorized increase of currency.

Thus gleams the sugar-coating which conceals the bitter contents of the pill. The government, by being offered a way of escape from imminent bankruptcy, is likely to embrace a plan which will force it to cut expenses and to tax rather than to borrow, since more borrowing under this plan would relieve few even of its immediate troubles. And the bondholders, tempted to the secure footing of guarantee against further depreciation, may accept almost without realizing it the depreciation they have already suffered. For what the plan really involves is a devaluation of the franc and its stabilization on a gold standard at about its present level—a plan which, if it had been proposed in its raw simplicity, would surely have aroused a storm of protest.

M. Caillaux, if we have understood his scheme correctly, may not be a magician, but he is at least a master of sleight-of-hand. There are to be sure many delicate and complicated adjustments still to be made before the trick is completed. It remains to be seen whether the thing can be as neatly done in practice as in the mind of the conjurer, whether the audience will see through it, and whether, if they do see through it, they will laugh or rage. But the plan has this advantage—that if once it is accepted, the unpleasant but wholesome results can no longer be avoided without nullifying explicit obligations assumed and concessions granted by the French nation and its bondholders.

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# Bolshevism in the Balkans

## *A Reality or a Bogeyman?*

ONCE more the Balkans are living up to their reputation. What other region could offer in quick succession such a variety of sensational headlines? In January and February, elections in Jugoslavia: a few people killed, quite a number wounded, 2,000 imprisoned, the second largest party in the state outlawed. March and April, Bulgaria in torment: political leaders of both sides murdered in the streets of Sofia, an attempt on the king, then the ghastly outrage in the Cathedral of Sveta Nedelia claiming some two hundred victims in killed and wounded, followed by hateful reprisals with many hangings, shootings without trial and raging persecution all round. May, the beginning of a political revolt in Rumania: the exasperated opposition parties form a block (as did the Jugoslav opposition last year) determined to turn out the government. Laws suspended in Jugoslavia, martial law in Rumania, an emergency force of 13,000 men recruited in Bulgaria.

And all that after three wars, after almost continuous fighting from 1912 to the end of 1918! What could the reason be? For all who live or travel in the Balkans know that its peasant populations are as peaceful as any. If they are devoured by any passion it is for the soil. They have no political greed, and fighting is misery to them; for who should till the fields when the man is kept away from the village? Of course, all is not well in the Balkans. There are many old troubles and some new. To begin with, the three wars have left the Balkan problem as tangled as it ever was. There is, I think, not one frontier, not one division of nationality which is frankly accepted by both sides as fair and final. And, then, in the various countries things have changed since the War. Wealth and power are passing with revolutionary suddenness and thoroughness from one class to another. That process, not yet ended, is painful and disturbing. Socially and politically the Balkans are in travail. What else does one need for explaining all that unrest in Bulgaria and Jugoslavia and Rumania?

But that is not the explanation one gets in the news. Take up the papers appearing in any of the European capitals, look up and down the news and leader columns, and whenever you come upon the heading "Balkans" you are, in nine out of ten cases, sure to find the conclusion "Bolshevism." Especially since last summer we have lived in a perpetual scare of the Bolshevist danger in the Balkans. The alarm is echoed from one news agency to another and reverberates throughout the press in ever larger type. Against that avalanche of "damnable iteration" most efforts to throw light on what is really happening have failed to prevail, with calamitous results, especially for the Balkans. Balkan problems are admittedly many and complex, but not insoluble. It is sad, therefore, to see that when in the West even the most poisoned quarrels are one by one being laid to rest, in the Balkans things move literally from bad to worse. The situation is now worse than it has ever been since the Armistice, and the year's troubles are not ended over there. We shall hear of new conflicts, springing from some substantial cause, and with regard to which there should be something to be said for either side. But it is more likely that as soon as they are reported we shall hear, instead of intelligent explanations, the excited shout of "Bolshevism" roll out again from the editorial offices. Before these probable events occur, and before we attempt, at some future occasion, to discuss what is the meaning of the Balkan trouble, it is as well, therefore, to try and dispose, once and for all, I hope, of the question whether Bolshevism is or is not one of the moving forces and a real danger in the Balkans.

Now, there are a number of ways in which one could attempt to find an answer. One might use a sociological argument and demonstrate, which would be easy, that a country of peasant proprietors is the least likely soil for a Bolshevist culture. Or one could point out that those governments who so frequently make use for party tactics of the supposed Bolshevist danger do not really quite believe in it. For when last winter the Bulgarian Foreign Secretary, M. Kalvov, went to Belgrade and Bucharest to canvass for an anti-communist alliance he was not treated even with respect. He met with a similar rebuke from that occult directorate, the Council of Ambassadors, when he asked permission to increase Bulgaria's standing army; and after being allowed this spring to equip an emergency force of some 13,000 men the Council insisted on its disbandment only a few weeks later. But if I may be allowed to be reminiscent, I should prefer yet a different test. I should like to submit as evidence extracts, so to speak, from the diary of a Bolshevist scare. This for a number of reasons. First because last summer's scare has so far been the most instructively elaborate; then, because at the time I happened to be in Rumania, which country was the object of the scare, and I can write from my own experience; and, above all, because no argument could be so definitely convincing as the piquant confession which the humor of circumstances forced out of the culprit's own mouth.

Of the various countries of southeastern Europe Rumania had been least troubled by violence since the War. There was no reason to expect any seri-

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ous outbreak there. Yet, suddenly, in the full of the summer, the country was reported to be in the throes of dangers innumerable. I have before me, in Rumanian translation, a number of reports from leading European agencies and journals. Reading them together one gets an appalling picture of what must be either the infirmity or the infamy of modern newspaperdom. Some of the news was pure invention, most of it was grossly exaggerated, and not one single message was altogether accurate.

Towards the end of July the Rumanian government issued some new regulations on the application of martial law. As there was no obvious reason for that step the "Radio" agency tried a guess and announced that it had been taken because the government feared a coup from General Averescu, leader of the so-called People's Party. "Reuter" accepted the suggestion and passed it on to its clients, stating that martial law had been proclaimed for the whole country. So did the "Wolff" agency, which supplies German, Austrian and Swiss journals. But very soon, imperceptibly, these various threads began to be woven into the now customary Bolshevist tissue. A wire sent from Bucharest on July 28 gave the Daily Express another reason for the action of the Rumanian authorities. The population, it said, was much disturbed, as several Russian war ships had been seen near the Bessarabian coast and Soviet troops were gathering on the Bessarabian frontier. "People grew even more excited when it was learned that the Rumanian Ministry of War had canceled all leave, has mobilized reserve officers and has begun to concentrate troops in Bessarabia." An almost identical message appeared in the Daily Telegraph: "The Rumanian Minister of War has canceled all leave, as a precaution. Moreover, he has ordered reserve officers to be mobilized and has begun to concentrate troops in Bessarabia. Finally, martial law has apparently been proclaimed for the whole of that threatened province." This was telegraphed from London to the Matin and published by it exactly. On August 1 the Tribuna was able to state that it had been established that the fire at the government's tobacco factory and the explosion of a munitions train had been the handiwork of Bolsheviks. Another Italian journal, the Mezzogiorno, had further sensational details to give. It said that, following the proclamation of martial law, the authorities were carrying out mass arrests of communists and socialists and that many industrial establishments had been militarized in Transylvania; the Rumanian government was disturbed "by the intense propaganda which Soviet agents are making among the peasants," "the workers are in a state of great excitement and risings may break out at any moment."

Thus, almost invisibly, the web was woven over the reader's eye. Going to bed with a mild report of a plotting general we awoke to find an important country reeling from the danger of riot and war. That information was of course reproduced by a good many papers. But let these few samples suffice. They are taken from the chief agencies and from some of the best known European journals. Yet none, or almost none, of the alleged facts were true. There had been no concentration of Russian or Rumanian troops beyond those already encamped for many a month on both sides of the Dniester. There had been no canceling of leave, no mobilization of reserves, and these stories never appeared even in the finely imaginative Rumanian press. No one in Rumania as much as mentioned the militarization of works. Not one jot of evidence could be found to support the story of General Averescu's alleged Mussolinist intentions. The solitary grain of truth in that whole concoction of nightmares was the news about martial law, and even that not a whole grain. For, firstly, martial law was not in force in the whole of Rumania, and, secondly, it had not in fact been then proclaimed. Martial law had been in force for a very long time in Bessarabia, in the so-called Quadrilateral (that is, that part of the Dobrudja which was taken from Bulgaria in 1913), in certain border districts of Transylvania and in Bucharest. The only actual happening was that on July 25 the military command issued new regulations prescribing severer punishments for the political crimes already punishable under martial law.

That was all. There was no obvious reason for the step and the taking of it added not a heart beat to the indolent Rumanian summer life. About the same time the King was visiting in the country, and the Queen was riding about the beautiful Prahova valley, in the Carpathians, in such secure freedom that a motor car sent towards night to meet her wandered about for hours without being able to find her track. It is impossible to say whence the foreign agencies and papers got their wrong facts. One can only point out one or two curious peculiarities of their Bolshevist scare. The first striking thing is that it coincided with the critical period of the Anglo-Russian conference. More suggestive even it is that the wrong facts published abroad seem to have been of foreign making. In Rumania, too, there was an attempt to start a Bolshevist scare; but the fictions circulated abroad were quite original and had not appeared in any of the papers who took a hand in the game at home.

Let us now turn to the home press. We shall get from it what everybody will be bound to accept as a conclusive answer to our query whether there is a Bolshevist danger in the Balkans. On the day when the new regulations for the application of martial law were issued, the Under-secretary of State for Home Affairs declared that perfect quiet reigned in Rumania; the step was simply a preventive measure taken by the military command. But that, apparently, was not everybody's view in government quarters. On July 27 the semi-official

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Viitorul applauded the measure and declared that

> if need be, the government will make use of even sterner measures . . . Rumania, after having been liberated, will not stand with crossed arms and allow herself to be assassinated by criminals from outside with the help of their accomplices at home.

These were grave words. Had anything happened to justify them? A series of disasters had indeed befallen various public services, civil and military. On July 31 the Viitorul gave a list of them and then went on to say that

> they are not the accidents of a blind fate. They evidently are the result of plots by the enemies of the Rumanian State; they have wriggled their way into the country and are trying to endanger its order and security, and to destroy its defensive and economic machinery.

These various alarms began to show their effect abroad. There were heavy offers of Rumanian stock on the London and Paris exchanges; a number of Italian manufacturers stopped supplies or demanded that they should first be insured against the risk of riot and pillage. Hence, on August 1, the government issued through the Havas and Rador agencies a statement assuring that the new measures were purely preventive and that nothing had happened in Rumania "that could be interpreted as a symptom of unrest or of anarchical communist activity."

Such a denial called for drastic treatment. On August 3 the Viitorul surpassed itself. In a hysterical leader it cried aloud that

> we are faced with a real offensive of anarchy. As a result of Communist activity hundreds of people are dying each day in Bessarabia in the defence of their country, our sources of production are endangered,

and more in that agonized strain. "Hundreds of people each day"! What a terrible casualty list, if one reckons that Rumania has occupied Bessarabia since 1918! As no figures had been published, I made private inquiries in military quarters; they said that 200 would be an outside estimate of the total casualties suffered by Rumania in Bessarabia in all those years. About the same time another semi-official paper, Dreptatea—published in Chisinev (Bessarabia)—reported an encounter between Rumanian and Russian outposts, as a result of which several soldiers and one Rumanian officer were supposed to have been killed. The general commanding in Bessarabia had to beg an opposition paper to make it clear that the story was invented from beginning to end. From that day he subjected the semi-official paper to a preventive censorship.

But yet another semi-official journal came to the rescue. The Infratzirea, published at Cluj (Transylvania), was all excitement on August 7. It frantically cried out that

> a real army of agents of Red Russia have invaded Bessarabia. They use all means, from propaganda in the papers and revolutionary pamphlets to criminal attempts with dynamite, in order to let loose the storm of revolution and destroy our rule.

The Bucharest Universul was able to add that the Soviets were at the time "spending hundreds of millions of dollars on propaganda in Rumania." "Hundreds of millions of dollars"—in Rumania alone! What prodigals these Soviets are! Abroad these extravagances were decidedly embarrassing. While, therefore, Infratzirea and the others were hinting at disaster, there appeared in the Neue Freie Presse (Vienna) an interview with the Rumanian Minister for Foreign Affairs, in which M. Duca complained of the stories about revolution in Rumania. "The truth is," he insisted, "that order reigns and has never ceased to reign in the whole country. Indeed, our country is the least fitted for social revolutions."

M. Duca undoubtedly was right, both as regards actual fact and as regards possibilities. But, then, what were we to make of the hair-raising reports spread by the governmental press, especially by the Viitorul, the chief organ of the party in power? Fortunately, we had no need to take refuge in conjectures. The argument was clinched in surprising fashion by the Viitorul itself on August 23. On that day the paper gave pride of place to a special article in which its mixed feelings found expression in a lavish jumble of heavy type. The article was entitled The Attitude of Foreign Capital towards Rumania and culminated in the following passage:

> It is true that because of ill-founded rumors, set going by our enemies abroad and sometimes even by interested people at home, the serious foreign capital has kept rather aloof from Rumania hitherto. The representatives of that capital, just because they were serious people, have tried to find out *the true situation* of our country, without allowing themselves to be misled either by alarmist rumors from abroad or interested rumors from here. And they have been able to learn: *That order reigns in Rumania, that there is no danger of war whatever on our frontiers . . .*

The italics are the paper's. They are conclusive. Thus the Viitorul showed itself handsomely repentant for having raised such an awkward hue and cry just when the Rumanian Minister of Finance was visiting London in search of a loan. Of its new mood a little more was revealed in the comments of the Indreptarea, the organ of the Averescu party:

> When the Viitorul itself recognizes that the Communist party has among its members neither peasants from the villages nor workers from the towns, but only a few agitators, and that in such circumstances it cannot be of any danger to the peace of the country . . . then we, too, are entitled to ask: why did you take fright, why did you alarm the people, and why did you criticize with such violence those who from the beginning told you that you were exaggerating?

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Why, indeed? Reasons there are in plenty, and the reader himself probably knows or suspects some of them. But to discuss that is outside the task which I have set myself in this article. It was necessary to skin once the long-lived red herring of Bolshevism, which invariably is being dragged across every attempt to throw light on the ugly Balkan situation. There is but one thing only that remains to be pointed out, and that is the curious though instructive fact that always it was the governmental press, and it alone, that laid itself out to convince people that all was far from well in Rumania; an unexampled case of conscientious self-criticism, it would seem, though in truth less modest and foolish than it appears at first sight. The opposition and independent papers, even the most conservative, never ceased to deny the fables of Bolshevist activity and danger. When in the end that semi-official press itself so comprehensively confesses its true mind, there is no need to inquire any further whether last summer's widespread rumors about Rumania had any substance or not. The stories which were circulated by all the chief news agencies and by a hundred European papers are proved to have been utterly false. That is the inevitable conclusion in this particular instance. It may safely be used to answer also the general question: Is it Bolshevism or is it something else that lies at the root of the growing unrest in the Balkans?

D. MITRANY.

# Can the King Do Wrong?

IT is often supposed by superficial commentators upon the American constitutional system that the individual in the United States enjoys greater protection for his personal rights than foreign systems accord. In so far as concerns the relations between the individual and the state or community the inference is erroneous.

While we do permit the individual to seek redress from the officer who violates his rights, the efficacy of the remedy is limited. If the officer misinterprets the law or refuses to act, writs of certiorari or mandamus may lie. If his wrongful act causes pecuniary damage, he may also be sued, but then only the wrongdoing subordinate and not his superior, unless the latter expressly authorized the tort—not a common case; and even this limited protection to the citizen has now been much qualified by the growth of administrative justice with its discretionary acts which escape judicial review. The result is that few injured members of the public take the trouble to prosecute the officer or employe who has injured them. What we refuse to concede is that the state or community in principle bears any legal responsibility for the wrongful acts of its employe, and herein the American and English legal system differ markedly from the legal system prevailing in most of the countries of continental Europe.

The reason for this insistence upon the irresponsible state in Anglo-American law lies in certain historical anachronisms which, by their very antiquity, have defied modern changes in political theory and the obvious necessities of modern life. The maxim that "the King can do no wrong" is more strongly entrenched in the United States than in any other country of the western world, and it dominates the courts to such an extent that even the efforts of legislatures to loosen its shackles have been more or less frustrated by narrow interpretations. For the state to assume responsibility for the torts of its agents or officers, has been deemed a form of sacrilege against an article of faith.

When the California legislature undertook to make compensation to an individual for a tort committed by its prison officials, the statute was held unconstitutional as making a "gift" to a private individual. So the New York Court of Appeals gave an exceedingly narrow construction to a statute empowering the Court of Claims "to hear and determine a private claim against the state" arising out of torts of its agents, wherein the state "hereby consents . . . to have its liability determined." While the state was held to have waived its immunity from suit, it was deemed not to have waived its immunity from responsibility for the torts of its agents, so that, as one commentator has said, the claimant is given permission merely "to amuse himself."

The doctrine survives by virtue of its antiquity alone. It is historically incorrect, and it is neither sound, just, nor responsive to modern social needs. The maxim originally meant that the King was *not privileged* to do wrong; not that he was incapable of doing wrong. But Blackstone and Coke, misinterpreting Bracton's sense and somewhat ambiguous language, and relying upon the known disability to sue the King in damages, construed it to mean that he was *incapable* of doing wrong. Hence the injured individual naturally had no redress against him, or against the state which he personified, though historically the conclusion as to infallibility followed rather than preceded non-suability. The political theory necessary to sustain the anomaly was furnished by Hobbes and later by the analytical jurists, like Austin, who maintained that the King, as the maker of the law, must necessarily be above the law, "King" and "government" being apparently regarded as interchangeable terms. Substitute "state" or "government" for "King," and we find the doctrine maintained in its pristine though unmerited glory by the United States Supreme Court.

This was not always the view of that court. Prior to the Eleventh Amendment, the court saw no incompatibility between suability and sovereignty,

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Chief Justice Jay saw no sound distinction between a citizen suing the 40,000 citizens of Philadelphia—a possibility universally admitted, as Philadelphia was a corporation—and a citizen suing the 50,000 citizens of Delaware. It was only later that there developed the various rationalizations seeking to justify the non-suability or immunity of the state—that the King (state) cannot issue a writ to himself; that there is an inconsistency in the idea of supreme executive power and subjection to suit; that a state would suffer an indignity in being compelled to submit to a judgment and execution; that it would embarrass the state in the performance of its duties to subject it to suit at the will of individuals and to submit the control of its instruments and its money or other property to judicial tribunals; that states should not be coerced to pay debts which for various reasons they might not be willing or conveniently able to pay.

Chief Justice Marshall pointed out that the protest of several of the states against the decision in Chisholm vs. Georgia, which subjected Georgia to a suit in the federal courts and led to the Eleventh Amendment, forbidding such suit, was induced not by any apprehension that the dignity of the state would be degraded by compulsory appearance in the courts, but by the practical fear that they might be compelled to pay their debts. Thus it comes about that we listen to Bar Association addresses, entitled The Dishonesty of Sovereignties or statements from courts of "a deep sense of the injustice of governments." Far from promoting the dignity, honor or practical functioning of the state, the refusal to submit to the rules of law and to those principles of justice which are enforced against other corporations constitutes a blot upon the state and induces disrespect and resentment. Parenthetically, governments often seem oblivious of the fact that their own breach of elementary moral obligations or promises undermines the security of the state itself, which essentially rests upon the respect of its citizens.

In matters of contract between the state and its citizen, the federal Congress, by 1855, and the British courts, and many of our states, somewhat later, had recognized the propriety of a suit against the state and overlooked the alleged indignity. Yet it is not perceived why a breach of contract is any the less a "wrong" than a tort, and the fact that monarchical Europe has long detached itself from the fetters of the doctrine of state immunity for the torts of its officers gives ground for the belief that the democratic United States may soon be persuaded to adopt the same modern view.

It can easily be shown that the doctrine of non-responsibility of the employing state, accompanied by theoretical responsibility of the mistaken or wrongdoing subordinate employe—the proclaimed solace for the public conscience—works gross injustice not only to the luckless victim of the official injury, but also to the officer or employe, and frequently results in danger to the community. If the underpaid, subordinate employe is alone responsible in law, the risks of accepting public office or employment fall upon him with unjust severity and with detriment to the public service. Only the officer or employe financially irresponsible can afford to accept public office, and the fact that many subordinate officers are "judgment proof," shows how illusory the alleged legal remedy of the injured citizen really is.

Moreover, small pay with large risks induces fear of enforcing the law. A health officer, for example, who in good faith believes a horse to have glanders or anthrax and thereupon orders it shot, may, on the verdict of a lay jury that he was mistaken, find himself subjected to heavy damages, without support or sympathy from the government or community that employed him. It is evident that his successors or colleagues will decline to assume such ungrateful risks and may prefer to permit the community at large to run the danger of infection and disease. Nor is it any defense to the subordinate that he acted under orders of a superior, even the highest executive officer, if the order proves for any reason to have been illegal.

These examples manifest such defective social engineering that legislatures may in general be persuaded to admit, as a very few have tried to do, that the community itself, like other employing corporations, should assume and bear the risk and responsibility for the mistaken or wrongful acts of its agents. Monarchical and republican continental Europe has long admitted the soundness and justice of this rule. England is now preparing a comprehensive reform in this direction. The United States should not delay its adoption.

The doctrine of state irresponsibility may have been tolerated so long, not only for the possible reason that the wrongdoing officer may be sued, of theoretical rather than practical utility, but on the ground that local subdivisions of the state, like counties, municipalities and school districts, are suable. But this has not served to make them in all cases legally responsible to an injured member of the public. It has served to produce the conclusion, in general, that counties and school districts, as subdivisions of the state for "governmental" purposes, share the state's irresponsibility in tort if not its immunity from suit. Cities, on the other hand, present to the courts the problem of determining when the function in issue is "governmental" and when "corporate"—the theory being that in the former capacity the city is but an agent of the state and hence immune, whereas in the latter capacity legal responsibility for torts is admitted.

But the duty of determining when the function is "governmental" and when "corporate"—a distinction in theory, with a certain justification, applied in Europe to all political groups, and not merely

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to cities—has resulted in the United States in distinctions without a difference and in anomalies without parallel. There is a fair degree of unanimity that police duty and fire-fighting are "governmental," and that the supply of water, gas, electricity and transportation is "corporate." But learned courts have differed on the question whether the toiling collector of garbage or the street-sweeper or driver of an ash-cart is engaged in the sovereign "governmental" duty of caring for the public health or in the modest "corporate" function of caring for the streets and highways. Why the cleaning or management of the streets or the operation of public buildings or public improvements or utilities is less "governmental" than the operation of schools, parks, playgrounds, hospitals and city garbage dumps or vehicles, or why the extinguishing of fires or the management of schools and public vehicles generally is less "corporate" than the supply of gas, water and power is not easy for the layman to understand or for the lawyer to explain. Nor is it easy for the courts, which frequently reach diametrically opposite conclusions on the same state of facts, and often adduce arguments which are equally valid to sustain or deny the governmental or the corporate character of the public service in question.

A change is now due. The federal government will probably be the first to move in a comprehensive way. The fact that the government cannot be sued in tort has not relieved the government from having to deal with tort claims. They have simply been pressed upon Congress as private bills and have been considered by the Committees on Claims of the two Houses as occasion permitted. Not having the facilities of a court, the Committees have necessarily examined the claims on such evidence as they could obtain, without regard necessarily to legal rules, and in correspondence, not with legal considerations, but with the industry shown by the introducer of the bill in pressing it or with the disposition of the Committees. Many meritorious claims have often remained unconsidered. The bill, if favorably reported by the Committees, would then go to the House and Senate, where it would again run the gauntlet of legislative debate. How it would come out was a matter of luck.

These private bills have taken up so much time, of both the members of the Claims Committees and of the House and Senate, that Congress itself initiated the movement to submit tort claims to some sort of judicial review. This resulted, after certain special Acts giving a limited jurisdiction in aircraft cases to the War and Post Office Departments, in the general Act of December 28, 1922, conferring jurisdiction on all the heads of the executive departments and independent establishments to examine and pass upon claims for injuries to property arising out of negligence of government employes up to $1000 in amount, the awards being certified to Congress for payment. The Act has worked well; altogether 1242 claims have been allowed under it, with awards amounting to about $135,000.

But obviously this is inadequate relief to injured members of the public. The automobile owner, who, while riding with his family, was negligently run into by a truck driven by an employe of the Veterans' Bureau, and incurred with his wife permanent physical injuries, was able to recover for nothing more than the broken wheel and his crushed derby hat. Nor has the Act adequately relieved the Claims Committees. In the last Congress, 356 tort claims were introduced, few of which could be considered.

The new Suits in Admiralty Act by which the government permits suit for injuries committed by public vessels of the United States, will relieve the Congress to a limited extent. But negligence of government employes resulting in property damages exceeding $1,000, or resulting in personal injuries or death, apart from admiralty, are equally entitled to consideration and judicial review. It is quite likely, therefore, that the Chairmen of the Claims Committees will, in the next session of Congress, introduce a comprehensive bill creating a cause of action against the federal government for injuries sustained by the public through the negligence of employes of the government. Probably the jurisdiction of the Departments, with a review by the Comptroller General, will be increased to $2,000, claims above that amount going to the courts.

This conscious abandonment of the fetish that "the King can do no wrong" should exert a powerful influence on the states, counties and cities, in likewise abandoning the ancient, unjust, and unsound conceptions which have made for the irresponsible community in American public law.

EDWIN M. BORCHARD.

## Coda

Let the Winter gnaw the root
  Of the Spring's first lowly plant;
Summer will bring ruddy fruit,
  And the promenading ant

Climb the tufts beside the sorrel,
  Walk the rose above the weed;
Presently, the bees will quarrel
  And the dandelion seed.

Let the Winter gnaw the green
  Places where the panting sheep
Rested, let the casual bean
  Put its little leaves to sleep.

Later, all that ever grew
  Moist upon a pasture floor,
Every herb that drank the dew . . .
  Will be as it was before.

HAROLD VINAL.

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# Mr. Ware and the Peasants

IDEAS are important, but men are interesting. By this rueful observation, made after a long career misspent as a journalist whose business it is to travel up and down looking at men or to sit still thinking about ideas, I mean of course that as a rule, the important ideas are uninteresting; and that all too often, the interesting men are unimportant. When, therefore, I discover a man and an idea in combination, a combination both interesting and important, I get excited. That is the case, in my judgment, with the story of Mr. Ware and the peasants.

All his life, Ware has had notions about farming. He doesn't know why or how he got interested in the subject; but ever since he has been old enough to think at all, he has been puzzling over the questions, How do farmers farm? How do they sell their products? Aren't there better ways of doing both? Born and raised in Pennsylvania (of American stock for many generations) Ware's 'satiable curiosity has led him, like the elephant's child, into some curious adventures. It caused him, after studying modern agricultural methods in college, to go out and make his way across the wheat country in the Northwest, learning the business from the roots up and, as he worked with the wobblies harvesting the wheat in hot weather, from the skin out. Then presently, along came the great Russian drouth and famine of 1921 and Ware got interested in that. He began to look into the farming methods of the Russian peasant, and made some discoveries which, from his own queer point of view, he found important.

He discovered that drouths were more or less chronic in Russia: not big ones like that which devastated the Volga districts in 1921, but little local ones. He presently found that this was not usually due to any lack of moisture, but to the fact that the Russian peasant, with his age-long experience behind him, still didn't know how to farm. Many people are fond of assuming that there is a peasant instinct, which enables the tiller of the soil and descendant of tillers to get the best possible out of a piece of land, just as they assume that there is a mother's instinct which knows how to bring up a baby. It isn't true in either case. The mother's instinct left to itself will kill off one baby out of every two, as it does today in China and India, instead of saving 93 out of every 100, as organized intelligence does in the United States. Farmers, the world over, are about the most conservative people there are. So long as their methods give them a bare living most years, they are likely to let well enough alone. This has been true of the Russian farmer. He has had a number of bad farming habits of which the two worst were extremely shallow ploughing, and leaving the fields, ploughed in the spring, to lie open and baking in the sun until August, by which time much precious moisture has escaped.

Ware, thinking these things over, conceived the simple idea that it would be desirable to teach the Russians how to farm in such a way as to get the best use from the soil. Anybody, of course, could have had that idea; but it is in what followed that Ware showed his difference from you and me. You, very likely, would have mentioned to somebody what a pity it was that the Russians could not be enlightened. I would have written an editorial, throwing in some statistics from the Yearbook of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Ware, being perhaps simpler than either of us, made up his mind to go and teach at least a few Russians how they do it in America. And he at once saw that that meant tractors.

There was at that time, you remember—and still is—a shortage of draft animals in Russia. The War and the counter revolutions had killed off many, the drouth had killed off many more, and the peasants had been forced to slaughter most of the remainder for food. It is not good economics to eat your work animals; but what is economics to the father of starving children? Anyhow, Russia is just the place for tractors. Its broad prairies, so like the American Northwest, make possible the large scale operation which alone justifies the overhead cost of using machines.

But tractors cost money; and Ware hadn't any. Accordingly he went to a big New York committee which was then engaged in famine relief work and said to it:

"Give me $75,000 with which to take tractors to Russia, and I'll help make drouth impossible there forever more, except in the most catastrophic years."

Oddly enough, it was the Russian members of the Relief Committee who excitedly said "No!" to this proposal of the tall, quiet, sunburned young Yankee.

"What!" they cried, thumping their breasts and waving their arms in the stoical Russian way, "our people are starving, they ask for bread, and you would give them machinery? Do you think then that they could boil these tractors and make tractor soup of them?"

Ware saw that he would have to take a long chance. He took it.

"All right," said he. "Let me have $75,000 for my tractors, and I'll promise in one year to grow $75,000 worth of wheat with them. That way you'll have your famine relief and your tractors, too."

The Russians continued reluctant; but the Americans on the Committee began to see that here was a Yankee notion of the kind they understood. They

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gave Ware his $75,000 and told him to go ahead.

Buying his tractors was easy; but then came the question: Who was to run them? He decided he wanted young Americans, men who understood farming through and through. He remembered the days when he had been a bundle stiff, moving across the Dakotas, hated and abused by all the small-town sheriffs (who never realized, in their dumb sheriff way, that no bundle stiffs would mean no harvest, no taxes, no salary, no food and no sheriff). So he went back to North Dakota and began rounding up his little band of American missionaries to the Russian heathen. He went out on the farms and took his men, like Cincinnatus, from the plow. In at least one case this was literally true. Another man was needed in a hurry, and a couple of the boys thought that George might like to come. So they went out and found him plowing with a tractor. "George," they said, stopping him at the end of the furrow, "get down off that tractor and pack your suitcase. You're going to Russia and be a hell-roaring professor." And George did.

At first it seemed like a holiday to some of Ware's boys. Most of them had been in the A. E. F.; here was a chance to go back to Europe with no drill sergeant, fewer cooties, and no damn K. P.! The holiday spirit lasted even into Russia, where the Moscow government, with that divine genius for making a mess of things which is the hallmark of all governments, especially in Russia, instead of sending them down on the Volga, where they were most needed, assigned to them 14,000 acres of rough, hilly land near Perm, seventy versts from the nearest railroad, with wretched roads over which to haul in their gasoline. It was while they were on their way in that the boys first realized what they were up against. They had a great deal of American food with them; and meeting a train-load of refugees from the famine area, passed it out with a lavish hand. The refugees took it greedily; and in half an hour, four of them lay on the station platform dead from overeating in their weakened state. Looking at the corpses, the Americans began to feel that they were again face to face with war, only of another sort.

Once settled on the farm, the absurdity of their endeavor began to strike home. Here they were, ten Americans among 125,000,000 Russians, nearly all of whom are illiterate, superstitious, tradition-ridden, whom they were nevertheless trying to make overnight into North Dakotans! However, they had not much time for forebodings. They were soon too busy. For the famine still existed; and Russians from the nearby villages, who had seen their train come through, with the big banners on its side, sent anxious delegations, bearded men in boots, who never talked less than one hour on any subject. Would the Americans come to this village and plough their fields? Would they go to that one and show them the wonderful new machine?

In no time at all, every tractor was out on a circus tour of its own, going from town to town, one American with each tractor, and an interpreter with each American. Despite the eagerness of the bearded delegations, cautious salesmanship had to be used. Long ago, the village priests had told the peasants that tractors were the work of the devil. The priests' influence was at a discount now, but still . . .

Here is the Machiavellian device the Americans used. In every village, a delegation from the next one was waiting to escort the tractor on its way. The American boy driving the machine would invite a likely-looking member of this delegation to ride with him. Half way between towns, he would persuade the Russian to sit in the driver's seat and hold the wheel. If the pupil were exceptionally promising he would be shown the starting and stopping mechanism. Then, behold the miracle! Down the road comes this strange roaring monster from America, which is said to have a hundred horses, no less, concealed in its belly. And who is it sitting grandly on top of the beast, riding it as St. George might have ridden a dragon, causing it to go where he pleases while it obeys in noisy meekness, who but our own Ivan Ivanovich, husband of Marya and father of little Ivan! What villager after that could be cowardly enough to run and hide under the featherbed, lest the beast put out its forked tongue of lightning and burn him to a cinder?

That was not the only Yankee trick which Ware and his crew played. There was, for example, the matter of the little fields.

We have heard so much about the communal aspect of Russian village life that we are likely to forget the deeply-rooted individualism of the peasant mind. Grazing lands are held in common, it is true; the village is ruled by a council of elders; and when the estates of the nobles were confiscated, they were taken over by the nearby villages. But every peasant works his own land; the confiscated estates were divided and allocated; and when a man dies, his land is apportioned among his heirs. Through this division and redivision, the farm area is cut up into innumerable tiny strips, some literally hardly larger than a handkerchief. One man may have, and work, ten or twenty such strips, widely separated from one another. No one ever thought of doing it in any other way.

When the tractor, arriving in a village, had been sufficiently admired, its services were promptly demanded. Each man wanted a field of his ploughed, and ploughed first, and ploughed at once. Accordingly, the American and his Russian assistant would select a plot near town, and would begin. While the crowd looked on and marvelled, the long clean furrow would be thrown up, straight and black and moist. Another beside it, and another; and then—Merciful Saints Peter and Paul!—the Americanski is stopping! He has driven the Yankee beast out of the field into the road again. A hasty demand for explanation; and the Yankee, unperturbed, gives it:

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"Your fields are too small. The tractor cannot turn around in them. It can only work in big fields—big, *big* ones. If I must plough only these little patches, then I shall go on to the next village."

Feverish debate. What did the Americanski say? But what shall we do?—Our horses are all dead. If he goes away we are ruined.

At this point the Americanski drops a careless word. Of course, you could make all these little land-remnants into one big field, and plant and harvest it, and give each man a share of the harvest according to the proportion of his land to the whole.

More feverish debate; and in a miraculously short time—sometimes only three or four hours—the proposal is accepted. Something has been accomplished which the communist orators have tried, with day-long speeches, over and over, to achieve, but in vain.

One could go on indefinitely with stories of this campaign, did space permit; but it does not. One of the most interesting tales, to me, is the interview with Trotsky. The boys from North Dakota felt that they deserved a little holiday, after working fourteen hours a day all summer; and they went down to Moscow for a brief visit. Trotsky heard they were in town and sent for them.

They lined up in his office—big, strapping fellows, all, as it happened, wearing their old A. E. F. uniforms—"putting them," as Trotsky observed with a wry smile, "to good use for once, anyway." It chanced that nearly all the Americans except Ware were of Scandinavian descent, and of only one generation in America. This fact was mentioned, and the Soviet war lord seemed much impressed by it.

"So!" he said, "in one generation you make Scandinavian peasants into American farmers and American tractor experts. Well, we can make Russian peasants over, like that, too. We are going to. Go back to your tractors; and you will see!"

The boys went back to their tractors, and went on with their work. By now they had made good on their promise to raise the wheat which Ware's $75,000 might otherwise have bought in New York. The worst of the famine was over; the American committee was in the process of dissolution; and the funds were running low. As far as Ware was concerned, he had just begun to fight; but he saw that he would have to fight on a new front.

He came back to America, and told his story first to the manufacturers of tractors. Here was a new market which was a hundred Golcondas stacked on top of each other. The peasants could buy tractors, if given a little time to pay. They would buy tractors, if anyone would take the trouble to sell them in the Russian way, beginning by giving the customer some faint notion of what tractors are all about. Ware wanted to be the go-between. But the tractor manufacturers wouldn't listen. Being alert, intelligent American business men, when they thought of Russia, their mental picture was of a Bolshevist with anarchic whiskers and a bomb under one arm, on his way to nationalize a convention of Sunday School teachers. Therefore, Ware saw that he would have to find some other answer.

He has found it. The Russian government which has now for some years been moving steadily by jerks, so to speak, toward the right, is greatly impressed with his ideas. The officials believe that the application of American farm methods will be of enormous value to the new Russia which is now emerging.

Therefore, another farm has been turned over to Ware. This one is far to the south, 15,000 acres on the railroad, in a magnificent farming, dairy and orchard region in the northern Caucasus near Rostov-on-Don. There the Russian government will coöperate with an American corporation, Russian Reconstruction Farms, Inc., in carrying on an operation which will be both a self-supporting business enterprise and a demonstration station of American farm methods. Young, and therefore adaptable, peasants who are at present serving in the Russian army, will be quartered in barracks in a nearby town and will spend their days on the farm taking a short intensive course in farm methods—not forgetting the tractors! As soon as one group has been run through the mill, it will be sent away and another will take its place. Agricultural experts from Moscow will be present to help explain to the students both what is being done, and why. Special attention will be directed toward agricultural economics and finance. The sort of coöperation which was forced upon the peasants when the tractor refused to plow little fields, will be extended into a whole system. In short, the new farm will be a focusing point for new and improved methods, whether from America or anywhere else, for putting Russian peasant life on the highest plane possible.

I use the future tense in describing this plan, only in the interest of strict accuracy. All the contracts with Moscow have been signed. Already, $55,000 worth of American machinery has been shipped and is on the ground. The farm is an old one, which has for years been in continuous and successful operation. Most of the members of the American unit have already sailed.

I have talked about Ware and his ideas in terms of bringing American methods to Russia; but of course, much more than that is involved. The ignorant peasant in his village is not the only person who needs to have pounded into him the principles of large-scale, efficient and intelligent operation. Here in our own United States, most of our farms are still too small to make profitable the sort of machine operation which is most economical. Even with our vaunted educational machinery, our farmers as a rule do not know what their operations cost them, what is the lowest price at which they can afford to sell, nor what they need to do to prevent the rigging of the market against them.

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Improved technique of course will not solve "the farm question" as it exists in this country. Fundamentally, that problem grows out of the fact that the farmer buys in a protected market and sells in one where he is subject to world-wide competition from countries in most of which production costs are far lower than they are at home. Even after this major problem has been settled, and when world population, by overtaking world food supply has brought agriculture back to security, the farmer —all farmers—will still need to know the sort of things Ware and his friends are studying at Rostov-on-Don.

It would be odd, would it not, if ten years from now I found it advisable to write a magazine article about the group of Russian missionaries sent over to North Dakota to teach American farmers the new ways to farm?

BRUCE BLIVEN.

# Washington Notes

IN the last session of Congress the fight over tax reduction largely centered around dear old Mr. Mellon. He was pushed to the front as the leader in the battle to reduce the surtax, the bill was given his name and the statements, arguments and estimates used in its support largely emanated from him and those who spoke in his name or with his authority. The President was back of Mr. Mellon, not Mr. Mellon back of the President.

In the coming session I am credibly informed a different strategy will be adopted. It is Mr. Mellon's wish to keep in the background. He wants his personality subordinated. He does not think he ought to bear the brunt of the fight or be put into the position of the target at which the grim and resentful Couzens and the various battle-lusting Democratic and Progressive Senators shoot. It is but fair to the old gentleman to say that this disposition is not due either to political or personal cowardice upon his part. He is, his friends say, perfectly willing to bear his part in the fight but is of the opinion that Mr. Coolidge is and ought to be the natural leader in it.

Unquestionably this is a sound idea. The one difficulty about it is the innate feebleness of Mr. Coolidge as a leader.

Once in a while in Washington you hear mutterings and mumblings about the everlasting economy preached by the President. There are some signs, such as are contained in the protests from business organizations and individuals that flow into the Department of Commerce and in interviews given or speeches made at some commercial convention, that the continual harping on the subject by Mr. Coolidge is checking buying and slowing down business. At least that is the contention of a certain class of business men who are disappointed over the failure of the boom promised last year to materialize. There is, I think, little need for Mr. Coolidge's friends to be worried over this undercurrent. It is natural and inevitable; but does not in the least alter the fact that with the great bulk of the people the economy stories about the President and his entourage make the biggest possible hit. The people eat them up. They chuckle over the stories of his refusal to buy a new suit of clothes and his getting his old straw hat cleaned instead of buying a new one, but they chuckle approvingly.

What the poor old kicked-around Senate, when it meets in December, will do to Mr. Dawes's proposal to amend its rules and reorganize itself to suit his ideas is a plenty. The number of votes the Dawes proposals will get when the test comes will be remarkable only because they will be so few. When counted they will make this midsummer campaign of the Vice-President look foolish and futile.

There is no longer any secret that Mr. Coolidge is not in the least in sympathy with what Mr. Dawes is trying to do and the way he is trying to do it. It is well known by those in close contact with the Executive that he will neither personally, politically, privately nor publicly lend the slightest aid to the Dawes ideas. They not only do not interest him but they bore him. He has not hesitated to express to certain of his intimates his belief that Dawes is wasting his time and to indicate his opinion that the General might be much better occupied doing something else. Those really close to him represent the President as feeling that Dawes is merely adding to the difficulties of reëlecting Republican Senators wherever he goes. I think I predicted a month or so ago in this column that the Dawes whirlwind tour would in the end turn out a dud. I herewith renew the prediction.

Unless I am greatly mistaken, long before next winter the country will find itself up against something new in the way of Volstead Act enforcement. There is certainly a new non-political, exceedingly efficient and quite determined personality at the head of the Prohibition Enforcement forces in the person of Col. Lincoln Andrews. My information is that Mr. Coolidge and Mr. Mellon have assured Colonel Andrews a practically free hand and real support. Otherwise he would not have taken the job. Those who know this gentleman know that. They also know he is accustomed to getting results. He has no other thought in mind about this business than results. Clear-headed, practical, young, energetic and decisive, he gave up a salary more than twice what he gets here to put this thing over. Those who think he will not get anywhere will change their minds before he is through.

So far as I can gather the Andrews-Mellon policy is this: they propose not to bother with small stuff but to go hard after the source of supply. The organization for a genuine drive is fast being perfected. For the first time since the Eighteenth Amendment real power is to be put back of the law. The people are to be given a taste of genuine enforcement not by fanatics but by practical, unpurchasable, unreachable agents. Then if they do not like it they can change the law. For the drinking classes this is the time to stock up. It will not be easy in another six months.

The latest hot-weather story dug up by the hard-pressed and luckless remnant of the "corps of correspondents" left stranded here when the President went away is a boom for Col. William Donovan, first Assistant Attorney General and widely known as "Wild Bill" for the Republican gubernatorial nomination in New York. There may or may not be anything in the idea, but many far worse candidates could be named. Donovan is the real thing. He and Andrews are not only close personal friends but not unlike in their qualities and character. Everybody in touch with the Department of Justice knows that Donovan is running the works. John Garibaldi signs on the dotted line and is sufficiently intelligent not to attempt to show initiative.

Of course Donovan had rather have the Cabinet job than the Governorship but the suggestion that Mr. Sargent

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will retire to Ludlow after next winter does not seem reasonable to me. Vermont office holders do not operate on those lines. One thing that makes the Governorship idea for Donovan sound likely to me is the close personal relations between "Wild Bill" and "Jimmie" Wadsworth. They are fast friends.

I haven't the least doubt that Senator Wadsworth would rather see "Wild Bill" Governor than anyone else but isn't it a low trick to play on that other little Colonel—Theodore Roosevelt? Last year they snatched young Teddy out of his pleasant little berth as Assistant Secretary of the Navy and put him up to run against—of all men—"Al" Smith. Now after he was darned near murdered, following in the footsteps of his illustrious parent, he goes off on a well-advertised, splendidly press-agented hunting trip to African—or is it Asiatic?—wilds. And while he is thousands of miles away they start grooming another man to run next year when, with no "Al" to interfere, the running for any Republican ought to be fairly easy.

When Teddy returns and hears about this there will be another conference of the Roosevelt Klan. Probably some rough stuff will be pulled. However "Wild Bill" is a bad man to get rough with. Personally I should pick someone else.

T. R. B.

Washington.

# Summer

## I

*The Ferry:* The river is oily grey; downtown a grey dull wall. A railroad barge, propelled by a tug, conveys used and discolored freight-cars labeled Wabash and Reading. The tightening skies, grey and dull yellow, are distended with thunder. When they burst, they must strew larger, louder, more exciting and more extraordinary names.

## II

*The Sea:* Outside the dry empty shadow of the bath-house, we squint into white and fierce blue. The soft sand oozes dryly from our toes, scorching our soles as we walk. Round blossoms of giant umbrellas confront us along the beach—solid red, awning-striped in white and green, melon-striped in yellow and madder. The blue water floats red bathing caps. Here we damp our feet where the sands have been darkened by the water; here we wade among silver nets. Stripling girls with straight necks and legs, tanned deeper than their bobbed tow-heads, in single slips of red or green, jump the waves or play ball on the beach; a boy with orange legs and arms slashes the blue in fast strokes of a crawl. We are melting in this heavy sun: to save our bodies we must cast them like his in hard orange bronze, we must immerse them in this blue molten metal white-cold about our knees which is yet not the statue but the mould. A wave has stung us and wetted us. Lie full length, repose in the cold. Watery mountains swell to meet us—we can climb them. They shake their fraying crests; the world is all white light and water. Alongshore—white walls—the slim piers—sea-flapping flag—fragile and blurred—the silver fringe—to sea, the stems—the fishing-nets—their grey stems—the grey sea—bury face—in grey sea.

## III

*A Train's Whistle:* Hoo-hoo-oo, in the late afternoon, through the open countryside, unhuman, pressing and sad, intoning a moment a phantom countryside of sun and summer from beyond the verge of memory—green swamp rushes of Navesink with a thin yellow sand-strip for horizon—men sink crab-bait from motionless boats—sheer green terraces over the river, with white flag-staffs on smooth lawns—a great silly white summer cottage with porte-cochères and a red cupola. Hoo-hoo—green lawns with big trees where the squirrels live as if forever like decent, industrious tenants—a hammock strung between the trees—H. C. Bunner—The Squirrel Inn—young ladies all in white, with long sleeves even in summer—they had had a picnic at Navesink—young men with straw hats and mustaches who came down from town on the boat—"I've a tale I long to tell, Sweet Marie"—Gottschalk as the man in Clyde Fitch who used to say, "I'm no Dodo bird!"—When someone was reading aloud the Tanglewood Tales and came to Hercules in the garden of the Hesperides, when he said, "Can you tell me, pretty maidens,"—all the grown-ups began to laugh—her frank clear American laugh—one never hears it any more—it must have been to that note they made love. Hoo-hoo-ooo-hoo! It fades in eager flight.

## IV

*The Boardwalk:* Hot dogs roasted twenty at a time on an enormous open stove, dabbed gamboge with vivid mustard on long-handled wooden trowels. Soda, buttermilk, maple-nut sundaes, hot buttered popcorn, salt-water taffy; the burnt fragrance of molasses pulled on nickle-plated machinery. As we eat, dim and languid from the swim, brief reflections of girls in wide hats and bright summer colors shine in the silver high myriad-paned mirror—in the sun that bleaches whites whiter and blues and yellows white.

## V

*Fireworks:* The sun has cooled yet everything is clear—the long sands are palest buff and the ocean greyest blue with the low waves like porcelain breaking frailest white between; the full moon, a shining buff, rises close and big. Tireless children, little blond girls and boys in pink or yellow pinafores, still slide squealing down their smooth bumpy slides in interminable line. But now the last sandwich has been bolted, the last hard-boiled egg been peeled—the coffee is cold in the thermos bottle. They strew the sands with tissue-paper and leave the beach to night. A shot is heard; all look up: the sky has darkened; a hiss of tinsel pierces the grey, showering violet and silver as it breaks its parabola. The deliberate reports of the mortars burst brooches of red, gold and green, falling bouquets that unfold in fresh clusters as the sprinkling flowers that gave rise to them fade—the loud detonation of a crowd of white electric stars. A scent of gunpowder singes the fresh fishy wind that bears in with the night from the sea—blowing shipboard, the dunes of Cape Cod, the hotels of Cannes out of season, sudden dark of Pacific spaces, the summer seaside of all the world. Children on the beach run down to the breaking waves, more savage and loud with the dark, and hold the brass-bristling frost-crystals of their sparklers out into the ocean and the night.

## VI

*Night:* The last random pops and shots of the Fourth—the effortful spluttering and chugging up a hill—the last wild ride with hilarious yells on its way back to New York. Then the long even silence of summer that stretches darkness from sun to sun.

Edmund Wilson.

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# Lunacy as Literature

TO BE reasonable, to make sense, is one of the strongest of human instincts. Carried to its highest point it provides us with art and science, and with philosophy, which is often eager to assure us that to be reasonable is against all our instincts. There is also a profound impulse in us to make nonsense; it is to be observed in little children shouting meaningless syllables to their irritated parents, and in tired artists creating parodies of their own work. The instinct to be reasonable is the one by which we live socially, make our money, and trust clocks, calendars, and time-tables; and we rebel against it not because it is unnatural, but because it *is* nature, tyrannical and jealous of our other instincts.

We have all suffered moments when we felt that no logical process of thought could solve our personal difficulties or account for our enthusiasms or aversions, and the new toy of this generation, the unconscious, has fortified us. It was the thoroughness of Dada's revolt against reason that made it interesting. Dada was tired of significant things and fought against the human instinct to make things make sense—the instinct, I mean, which makes us try to find a rhythm in the click of a train, a pattern in the surface of the moon, and a weasel in a cloud. It is anthropomorphic: since we are, to ourselves, significant, everything touching us must fall into our system of significance. Dada wanted to signify nothing; it was not easy, but at times the effort was close to success.

The thing that makes the American counterpart of Dada attractive is its appearance of stemming naturally from strong and abundant spirits; there is no weariness, no great sense of the futility of the mind to corrupt the impulsiveness of these lighter gestures. Note that in comic songs, in grotesque drawings, in such vaudeville as Doctor Rockwell and Joe Cook, the moments of lunacy are intervals in an extremely competent, but not over-sophisticated, handling of ordinary material. These flights of fancy are not in despair of discipline and order; they are added, out of pure joy.

In print we allow the least freedom. Compared with the number of delightfully crazy pictures, songs, anecdotes, and vaudeville turns, we have few examples of lunatic literature. Stephen Leacock's lunacy was only parody married to extravaganza; it was no more irresponsible than Gulliver's Travels. Nor is there anything actually irresponsible in the classic Alice in Wonderland, which is as logical as a fine detective story, on a different premise. Nor does the merely exaggerated, the merely incongruous, give quite the same sensation of the world being swung suddenly out of its orbit. That is precisely the sensation afforded by Ring Lardner's plays. The three which are published in his most recent book, What of It? (Scribner's), occupy ten pages together; he has written two others of the same length, published in magazines, and one a little longer, The Tridget of Greeva, which has actually, and disastrously, been played. Deep no doubt calls to deep, and it must be with our un-reason that we appreciate these plays; but the instinct to discover a reasonable basis for liking them persists. Act V of Clemo Uti is a fair sample:

*(A Couple of Salesmen enter. They are trying to sell Portable Houses. The rest of the cast don't want Portable Houses.)*

*Rest of the Cast:* We don't want Portable Houses.

*(The Salesmen become hysterical and walk off-stage left.)*

*Kevela:* What a man!

*Wayshatten (the Shepherd's Boy):* Why wasn't you out there this morning to help me look after my sheep?

*Chorus of Assistant Shepherds:*

Why did you lay there asleep
When you should of looked after his sheep?
Why did you send telegrams
When you should of looked after his lambs?
Why did you sleep there, so old,
When you should of looked after his fold?

*Sethso:* Who is our father?

*Gethso:* What of it? We're twins, ain't we?

*Wama:* Hush, clemo uti *(the Water Lilies).*

*(Two queels enter, overcome with water-lilies. They ooth make fools of themselves. They don't seem to have any self-control. They quiver. They want to play the show over again, but it looks useless.)*

His scenes are laid in the outskirts of a parchesi board, in a silo, or in Madison, Wisconsin. Act One of I Gaspiri is "a public street in a bathroom" and "three outsiders named Klein go across the stage three times" because, it would seem that they think they are in a public library; Act Three of the same is on The Lincoln Highway and at the end "eight realtors cross the stage in a friendly way; they are out of place." Not as parody, not as travesty, does any of this make sense; yet it does convey something, or it would not stand the test of re-reading, because the jokes are few. To me these plays are as definitely literature as Lardner's other work; and the juxtaposition of lines which have no bearing on each other creates overtones much more effective, in my ear, than the juxtaposition of inconsequent words in the poems of Gertrude Stein.

The madness of Donald Ogden Stewart has now extended to two books; though the Haddocks purports to be a story of life on a transatlantic liner, and The Crazy Fool* to be an Horatio Alger novel about a lad who "made good," the charm of both is that they are almost entirely irrelevant. Structurally Stewart holds together; that is one of his ways of writing parody, for which he has an excellent talent. But that superficial logic and the existence of definite and developing characters only emphasize the irresponsibility of the chain of events—if you can imagine a chain in which each link has from three to ten different shapes in succession. Mr. Haddock goes to breakfast on board ship and the dining saloon becomes in quick succession a barber shop, a jury room, a nominating convention (Mr. Haddock is nominated for President), a notification, and finally a dining saloon again . . . In The Crazy Fool the mad events can keep up the semblance of reality and be one thing at a time for not more than half a page; the long scenes—there is a masterly one concerned with taking a train—resolve themselves into half a dozen fragments, not one of which has anything to do with the other. Those who remember Charlie Chaplin examining a watch in The Pawnshop and creating, in the briefest time, the character and the setting of a dentist, plumber, draper, heart specialist and diamond merchant, will recognize this technical stunt of Stewart's, and will recognize, too, how inordinately difficult it is to accomplish with the printed word. It is a funny phantasmagoria, a laughing nightmare. This is, of course, not the whole of Stewart's interest; his intelligent satirical report on current forms of bunk is as good

* The Crazy Fool, by Donald Ogden Stewart. New York: A and C. Boni: $2.

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as most; and the actual downright fun in his pages is startling in quantity and amazingly high in quality. The humor of puns and silly exaggerations and ponderous verbiage is altogether lacking. Like Benchley and Lardner, Stewart has refused to accept the English tradition that all American humor is of necessity in the manner of Irvin Cobb.

It is a belief with those who have not tried it that nonsense is easy to write. It is not even easy to speak, as anyone may discover by trying to talk for two minutes without making any sense at all. The lunacy of Stewart and Lardner is satisfying because it makes no sense in a way we instinctively feel to be right. "In the centre of the long lawn a lady was dancing and almost the first thing one noticed about her was that she didn't have any clothes on," writes Stewart, achieving topsy-turvydom in the midst of what seems the most casually correct statement; but without excess, without for a moment leading us to say, This is unreasonable; the reason has abdicated long in advance.

The primary quality of work of this sort is that it amuses enormously; but there is no law compelling us to overlook the secondary and perhaps unintended qualities of a work of art. In these cases the hidden quality, or the hidden interest, is in the nearness of their fantasy to certain experiments in more serious forms of literature: you can trace relationships to Joyce and to Dada and to expressionism in the theatre. I fancy that one could withhold judgment as to the ultimate serious value of Stewart and Lardner, and yet enjoy them thoroughly, and enjoy them for everything they have in them.

GILBERT SELDES.

# CORRESPONDENCE

## The Quarrel in the Garment Trades

SIR: An editorial in your issue of July 1 leads me to believe that you have misunderstood the position of those members of the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union who are at present on trial before a committee of the Joint Board. Those involved in this dispute are the Executive Committees of Locals 2, 9 and 22, the three largest locals in our organization, who by order of the Joint Board were suspended on June 11.

Officially we are charged with violating the union's constitution by having had communist speakers at our May Day meetings. Publicly, in the English press, we are branded as communists; and President Sigman endorses the Joint Board's crusade against us by announcing his decision to drive all communists from our union. In our official union organ, Justice, and in the Jewish papers read by a majority of our workers, the Joint Board has announced *that this is not a question of "communism"; and that any member* has the right to belong to any political party he chooses. It is a question of "control of our union by its members," says Justice; and we of Locals 2, 9 and 22, now on trial agree that this is the real point at issue.

For three years we have been among those fighting the political machine which controls our union and by every sort of corrupt device maintains itself in power. Only a small percentage of us are Workers' Party members. In Local 9, of which I am manager, only three of the twenty-six Executive Board members belong to the Workers' Party; and most of the others, including myself, are not members of any political organization. We have at no time been opposed to the principle of arbitration; and we lent our hearty support to the plan for unemployment insurance and to the so-called "Ten Commandments" for regularization of the industry which were advanced by the Joint Board.

What we have opposed is the Joint Board's policy of announcing one sort of agreement to the workers, and signing another agreement with the bosses. We have opposed the raising of dues, and the levying of illegal taxes. We have demanded an accounting for the expenditure of $2,000,000 by the Joint Board. We have protested the calling of fake strikes and unnecessary stoppages. We have opposed our undemocratic system of representation by which every local, no matter what its membership, has five delegates to the Joint Board, thus giving Local 2 with 12,000 members, Local 9 with 8,000, Local 22 with 12,000 no more voice in the government of our union than Local 64 with 200 members, or Local 82 with about 300, or Local 3 with a few hundred. At every convention for years we have fought to have this system changed and at each convention we have been defeated by the political machine which has the power to create locals with fictitious membership; or can, after we have succeeded in electing delegates unfriendly to the machine, suspend them from the union or refuse to seat them.

Now, for the first time in the history of the union, all three of the largest locals, 2, 9 and 22—which have 60 percent of the membership in New York City—have chosen officers who are opposed to the Sigman-Feinberg-Perlstein political machine. That we are being tried for this crime, and not for "communism," is proven by the minutes of the last General Executive Board meeting at which Secretary-Treasurer Baroff reported that the International treasury was empty because of the refusal of Locals 2, 9 and 22 to pay the latest tax levied on the membership. We had refused to pay this because our membership had already been taxed to the limit and we demanded an accounting for previous levies before we submitted to any more. Secretary Baroff reported that "steps must be taken" to force us to obey the rulings of our officials, and these "steps" are the suspension of our Executive Committees and our star chamber trial.

Because we have been charged publicly with being communists, and because we know that in the eyes of the trial committee appointed by the Joint Board we are already adjudged guilty, we asked *for an open trial before an impartial, disinterested tribunal.* We suggested as judges, Eugene V. Debs, Norman Thomas, Scott Nearing, Frank P. Walsh, and Roger N. Baldwin; but our plea was denied.

We know already what the outcome of this trial will be, but in spite of it our fight for a democratic union is to go right on. Some of our officials have maintained themselves in office for ten years, and the workers have been powerless to dislodge them. Now there is a growing determination on the part of the rank and file to choose their own officers and refuse to accept those appointed by packed conventions. They are determined that the old order shall be changed, and that the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union shall be administered by, and for the benefit of, its members.

LOUIS HYMAN,

Chairman of the Joint Committee of Action, Locals 2, 9 and 22, International Ladies' Garment Workers Union.

New York, N. Y.

## What the Editors Should Do

SIR: John the Baptist dressed plainly, dined upon locusts and wild honey and preached in the wilderness, "Repent ye, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand," and all Judea went out to him.

Many men who live in cities do, say or write things Christ and John the Baptist would not approve, to meet bills of expensive city life.

Many editors, to hold their jobs in the city, write in favor of reducing taxes of the wealthy. Others may give morsels of encouragement to liquor law violators, free traders, and demoralizing movie producers.

If you want your paper to live on and make people better and happier, I suggest you buy a cheap farm over a mile from a village of less than 2,000, set up a printing office in the village, do all its clerical and manual work and learn to produce your fuel and nine-tenths of your food from the farm. One or two families might live on the farm, the rest in or nearer the village.

A farm may be bought much cheaper if there is a large proportion occupied by small and middle-sized trees. In summer you might raise all your vegetables and some to sell, for food and exercise. In winter, dig out small trees and cut down larger ones for fuel and exercise.

OLIVER WENDELL SMITH.

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## Mexican Land Laws

SIR: Your admirable editorial on "Blundering in Mexico" fails to touch upon one point in the land controversy which may be of interest to your readers. In addition to restoring the ejidos, communal lands belonging to the villages, the Constitution of 1917 provides definitely (Art. 27. vii) for the breaking up of latifundia. Overgrown private holdings of agricultural lands have been a scourge of Mexico ever since the time of the absurd grants by Spanish monarchs.

The constitutional provision now in force is in brief that the several state legislatures shall define what is the maximum acreage that in each state an individual shall be allowed to own. (It will be understood that conditions vary widely in the different states, making practically impossible a national law on this point.) Having done this, the state will demand that any individual owning more than the allotted maximum shall dispose of his surplusage. If he fails to do so, the state shall expropriate that surplus, paying for it in state bonds redeemable when the lands have been sold and paid for. These lands are then to be opened to homesteading in small lots, with minimum initial payments and a low rate of interest on the deferred balance.

This provision of the Constitution has had a most extraordinary effect on the Mexican tenant farmer. He has gone in with his fellows to form agrarian associations, learning the art of coöperation, and demanding access to the land under this law. So eager are these groups that they have not always been willing to wait for the needed statute to be passed. Probably some of the legislators have had their own reasons for delay.

Such is the aspect of the situation of which our citizens who own land in Mexico complain most loudly. They sniff at the Mexican state bonds offered in payment. They rail at the squatters who have taken possession without waiting for processes of law. They charge that in the passing and application of these laws there is graft and injustice. All of which is natural enough. Still, one finds the question rising in his mind: Do these outside land owners really wish to obey the Mexican laws? Would they admit that their holdings are too large for the public welfare? How much do certain individuals among them own, anyhow? I have reason to know that the Mexican government, if it cared to publish a list of American citizens, with the amount of land owned by each one, could illuminate this whole subject and at the same time achieve a news "scoop" that would be worth passing along.

GEO. B. WINTON.

Paducah, Ky.

## The Chinese Customs Service

SIR: Though in the main I heartily agree with your attitude of sympathy for young China and for the growing anti-foreign sentiment in the treaty ports, yet I cannot help resenting the way in which you seem to lump together for condemnation all foreigners who have ever had dealings in China. The Chinese Customs Service, with a personnel of British, Europeans, Americans, and of late years Japanese, has for three-quarters of a century played a great part in Chinese development and, it seems to me, played it for the interest of China. Originally it may have been created as a tool of British financial diplomacy, but under the leadership of Sir Robert Hart it became a most efficient administrative unit, an example of an incorruptible service in a land where government has usually meant corruption in high places, and most important of all a mediating party between China and the Powers. Members of that service enter it young, are required to learn the Chinese language, history, and institutions, and are for the most part loyal and sympathetic to the government that pays them. The Customs has organized for China an efficient postal service and a department of internal revenue between various provinces of the empire; it has built and administered a system of lighthouses along the coast. Perhaps the time has now come for China to take over entirely the administration of her customs revenues, which have for so long constituted her chief credit. However this may be, I do not think the many foreigners who have been or are now in the Customs deserve to be reproached with having treated the Chinese as helots or with having exploited them brutally. Experience drawn from my father's long career as Commissioner of Customs would show that a lifetime of such service in China led to a very real admiration for the Chinese and an earnest desire to understand and interpret them to our Western world.

KATHLEEN DREW JOLMAN.

Berkeley, Calif.

## Robert M. LaFollette

SIR: In the New Republic of July 1 Bruce Bliven's interpretation of Senator LaFollette's career and character seems to us the most intelligent of any that has yet appeared, doing him justice so far as words can do so. However, words are inadequate.

Those who loved him most must now be forgiven some bitterness when they hear the current talk of statues and monuments, they having pointed out years ago, when the fight was hottest, that an ounce of understanding and encouragement *then,* would be worth tons of monuments thereafter.

"Look not so much at me," said Thoreau, "rather look the way that I am looking." LaFollette has shown us what an American can be. He is the Declaration of Independence incarnate. After our sad disappointment in Taft and Roosevelt his coming was like the "rising of her star to them that are weary watching for the morning." We believe that our earnest work must establish the principles which were his constant guide and will eventually build for him an everlasting and beautiful memorial.

He has moved the world. We can never again be as discouraged, as supinely faint-hearted or as cynical as we were before his coming.

ALICE WHITNEY BURTON.

Deephaven, Minn.

## Mr. Sinclair Protests

SIR: With regard to Mr. Edmund Wilson's article concerning Houdini: you do not give any indication of being aware of the fact that Mr. J. Malcolm Bird, formerly one of the editors of the Scientific American, has published a book in which he gives a detailed account and analysis of the "Margery" phenomena. Personally I find this book unanswerable: you probably won't find it that, but at least your readers are entitled to know that this book exists and to have some account of its contents.

It seems to me very unfortunate that the New Republic elects to take an entirely reactionary attitude to the phenomena of psychic research. There is no need for you to be convinced, but you certainly ought to keep an open mind, and you certainly should give your readers an opportunity to hear both sides of the question.

UPTON SINCLAIR.

Pasadena, Cal.

[Because one contributor of one signed article fails to mention a recently published book, in the course of a discussion which only incidentally deals with the subject to which that book is devoted, Mr. Sinclair seems to feel justified in assuming an editorial policy of the New Republic, and a closing of our columns to material opposed to it. His assumption is unwarranted.—THE EDITORS.]

## Ideals of Life

SIR: The New Republic of June 3 speaks of:

> The merits of our forefathers as exemplified by our beloved President—know little, say little, work hard and save.

I can imagine the sarcastic smile on the editor's face as he wrote the word "beloved."

Let the New Republic come out boldly for the opposite ideals of life.

> Know everything—whether it is so or not.
>
> Talk all the time—whether you know what you are talking about or not.
>
> Don't work if you can help it—except to "work" your neighbors, and
>
> Spend more than you've got—never mind who suffers.

There would be millions ready to fall in behind you.

Incidentally the New Republic speaks of the "Bryan-Coolidge ideals." If there is any single ideal the two men hold in common except that of a decent domestic life, I don't know of it. It is mendacious to imply that either politically, economically or intellectually the two men think alike.

HENRY S. CHAPMAN.

Winchester, Mass.

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# Mr. White On Wilson

*Woodrow Wilson, by William Allen White. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 527 pages. $5.*

A LIFE of Woodrow Wilson is one of the hardest of contemporary lives to write. Those who have written about him are pretty sharply divided, and their writings surmount his memory like a roof too steep, partisans on one slope, scoffers and enemies on the other, and whoever tries to walk the thin crest of impartiality between finds his feet sliding now toward one extreme, now toward the other. His high purpose commands the loyalty, often vociferous, sometimes ridiculous, of one band; his aloofness and obstinacy throw the other contingent into an often just as noisy denigration. Where is the bridge between the two? It will grow partly as time passes, but time alone will not be enough. We really know so little about him, about how his inner mind worked, or, more important, about what his feelings did to his mind. So much of the public side of Woodrow Wilson is known, and spread out upon any number of pages of his own speeches, acts and notes, of other people's recollections. But so little of the private side of him has been revealed to us, and it was the invasion of the private side of him into the public side which robbed his public acts of victory. Up from somewhere within rose a jealous obstinacy which ruled him when it ought least to have done so. He couldn't help it, he was made like that, and perhaps what happened was inevitable, and the springs that made him act as he did lay very deep and ineradicably within him. These springs were not of his mind. His mind stands fairly clearly before us—a good mind, though by no means a wonderful one—it is clear up to a certain point, but the things that lie in the shadows beyond that point are the ones we shall have to know if we are ever really to know the whole man, and judge his outward accomplishment in the light of his inner difficulties.

No public men, of our day at any rate, suffered so great a handicap from the battle between their emotional and their intellectual natures. The peculiar emotional natures of Lloyd George and Clemenceau were inextricable partners of their brains, and served them well. To subtract from either any of his cat-like, sixth-sense agility or his energetic rage would not be an improvement, no matter how much improvement one may have clamored for in the achievements of both. But with Wilson it is different.

A little change somewhere, one feels, a little emotional start in some other direction, and—so many things might have happened. His tragedy lies in the closeness of the margin by which forces within himself gone awry defeated noble purposes and a good brain. An accident or two, and the battle might have gone the other way: some solitary tension in him relieved, just a little more pliability where he was obstinate, just a little more obstinacy when he was pliable. But perhaps nothing could have stayed the slow march—at the end a disastrous rush—of what Mr. White calls his "imperious puerility." There were in him great strength and great weaknesses; under the stress of his last years as President the weaknesses broke through and contracted, with the strength, a fatal, stubborn alliance.

Until we know both much more about Woodrow Wilson and much more about human nature, it may not be possible to account for this lost battle. Perhaps Mr. White puts his finger in the neighborhood of the answer when he recalls the kind of boy Wilson was, or may be supposed to have been—but this is necessarily pretty dark territory which his guesses only fitfully illuminate. Mr. White waters a few small seeds of information with a great deal of imagination, and the result, while not exactly biography, is at any rate interesting. Woodrow Wilson, says Mr. White, never fought as a boy, and never had to take a licking. "The spectacled little boy played alone and dreamed his beautiful dreams," which were never usefully shattered by a harsh boy-world. "He was put into spectacles which kept him out of many of the rougher sports that boys enjoy . . . when, by all the inalienable rights of boyhood he should have bruised his dirty little bare feet upon the broad path that leadeth to experience." "He skipped a boy's apprenticeship in the jungle combats of his race." About all there is to be said for his theory, which might be applied to a lot of little boys who turned out very differently from Woodrow Wilson, is that it blazes a trail for someone to follow later.

Mr. White is upon much less justifiable and often rather foolish ground when he interprets Wilson in the light of his racial heredity. His first chapter is called The Miracle of Heredity. He talks a good deal about Wilson's "hereditary urge," about this "scion of Irish Kings," about his "rollicking Irish spirit"; he speaks of his harsh treatment of Russia as "his first minor blunder, the first time he let his spirit, his happy Irish spirit, be guided by the dour Scot within him." Even though the connection between Wilson and his "race" is often merely playful, it is made too often for a reader not to think much less well of Mr. White's capacities than they deserve, and not to take other parts of the book less seriously than they might be.

On one page Mr. White speaks of this "broth of a boy," this "young Irish rascal," on another he notes that "his single-track mind was inadequate to carry his anger and his intelligence," or that "Wilson's intolerance for opposition often made him raze a great cause into a private quarrel," while "Roosevelt had some Titanic sense of drama which enabled him to dignify a petty quarrel into a great cause." Mr. White has penetration, but too often the "broth" and the "Irish rascal" win over the penetration. Mr. White really understands Wilson better than he lets on, and he is often exceedingly, and justly, severe in his adjustment. But, as if his own severity was too painful to him, he makes up by retreating in the opposite direction, retreats way back, past fairness, past kindness even, into the desert of sentimentality where no thought flowers.

Feeling, emotion; loyalty, displeasure—these for a long time will be a fog between Wilson and those who would like to understand him. Something about him made it difficult for people to see him in the round. Always one side of him or another engrosses us or distorts the picture. It is the flavor of him that we remember, not so much his acts, nor what he tried to do, but the face we saw and the words we heard which, though they ought to have seemed so irrelevant, came to us as so perversely large a part of whatever he said or did. Somebody not quite like the rest of us, and yet passionately, in his own way, trying so to be; "I want people to love me, but I suppose they never will." "He liked men in the mass," says Mr. White, "but was finical about his associates among men in particular." If one does not like men in particular, and shows as much, it is difficult not to let something of that maladjustment become visible, and affect unpleasantly many of the men in the mass. Many were so affected, but as many

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more probably loved him and think of him as one of the greatest of all.

History, greatness, final place—it is too early to place him. History will place him calmly, and perhaps justly, and show a man tremendously to be admired for what he tried to do, less to be admired for the way he set about doing it, and not particularly admirable for what he allowed his emotion to do to his mind. But history cannot place him truly. For the truth about Wilson is bound up in the feelings people had about him, the warm hatred, the cold dislike, the cool approval, the misgivings, the changes and apostasies, the hot partisanship and blind loyalty, and these things will disappear, and much of the truth with them.

ROBERT LITTELL.

# The Unit of Life

*The Cell in Development and Heredity, by Edmund B. Wilson. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1232 pages. $9.*

IT IS one of the ironies of our age that, as science progresses, the general reader becomes more and more ignorant of it. As the number of research workers increases they write more and more for each other, so that the great body of the educated public can no longer follow them. Nor do the middlemen, known as popularizers of science, often have both the inclination and ability to acquire a really accurate knowledge of what has been discovered. Accuracy is a difficult and painful acquisition. It calls for many details and qualifications which repel the public that wants easy and sweeping generalizations or some interesting "romance of science." Seldom nowadays does a master among the advance guard of scientific investigators, like Professor Wilson, stop to make a survey of the whole field to aid not only the professional student but the more general reader as well. We have almost forgotten the fact that the great founders of modern science, e. g., Copernicus, Galileo, Kepler, Gilbert, Boyle, and Newton, wrote for the generally educated public.

Professor Wilson began this book a generation ago as a course of lectures for a general university audience; and though in its present edition it has grown to be a volume of over eleven hundred pages of closely-printed text, over five hundred figures, and over three thousand references to original memoirs, it is still the best book for the intelligent citizen who wishes to inform himself as to what is really known about the fundamental unit of life. To be sure, being also written for students who are used to living in the open frontiers of science rather than in the closed and well bounded realms of traditional convention, there is here no haste to arrive at serviceable dogmatic conclusions on every issue. The main lines of evidence are always carefully marshalled, and their frequent gaps and inconclusiveness always indicated. But there is no departure from the main objective, to convey vital information as clearly as the facts will permit. Professor Wilson has not the titanic élan of Jacques Loeb, nor perhaps the fearless penetration of T. H. Morgan. But his judgment is always preëminently just and sound. Nor is his mind closed to speculative ideas that are too fantastic to be mentioned in the present state of polite biologic society, though they may receive more serious consideration in the future. Most valuable, also, are the brief but significant references to the historic setting of the various problems discussed. This greatly helps to make the book indispensable for anyone who wishes to be informed as to the human significance of modern biology.

It is amazing to realize how very recent are the discoveries as to some of the most basic facts about life. Thus, though the problem of generation has occupied man's attention, practically and theoretically, throughout the ages, it is not more than fifty years ago that the part played by the sperm cell in fertilization was definitely established. Even in the middle of the nineteenth century it was possible for a really great biologist like Von Baer, the founder of modern embryology, to believe that the spermatozoa in the seminal fluid were merely accidental parasites. Is it any wonder that our popular ideas of heredity, and of what determines it, differ little from those of savages?

Popular discussions of biology have for two generations been dominated by the issues of Darwinism. But in this as in other scientific books on biology the actual influence of Darwin seems almost negligible. There is, to be sure, a certain loyalty to the shibboleth word evolution. But there is not very much in common between the exact or mathematical methods of modern genetics and the speculative ideas of Darwin. This is not to underestimate the great services of Darwin in helping to establish modern biology as a natural science. No one who has read Darwin can deny his genius for gathering together vast bodies of facts and binding them together with luminous ideas. His honesty in weighing evidence will always serve as a moral inspiration to scientific workers in all fields. But there is a great gulf between the methods of Darwin as a field naturalist, and modern experimental biology. The methods of research of the latter have been forged not by Darwin but by Gregor Mendel, and earlier by Schleiden and Schwann. The fact that Darwin came at a time when the British intellect was being shaken out of its lethargic idolatry of the Bible, and that the Origin of Species and the Descent of Man helped to discredit in the popular mind the indefensible superstition that the book of Genesis was an infallible source of information on all subjects, has given to the ideas of Darwin and to the word evolution a prestige far out of all proportion to their inherent importance. Historians, philosophers, and sociologists have been too much infected with the spirit of combat to sift the matter justly. Even the biologists themselves in their public profession of faith have caught the fever and have been too much awed by an intellectually dead enemy—though in their actual methods of research they have been little affected by such vague words as evolution.

Mr. Bryan and the legislatures of some of our backward states cannot possibly revive the so-called mosaic account of creation. (There are really two mutually inconsistent accounts in Genesis, Chapters I and II, based on different sources.) Long before modern historical or "higher" criticism of the Bible had shown the Babylonian sources of the Hebrew account of creation, Fontenelle had disposed of the matter by remarking: "All people have had myths as to the origin of things. But by a special miracle the Hebrews had nothing but the absolute truth." So also apart from all speculations about theories of evolution this book on the cell makes clear the observable fact that each one of us begins his individual existence as a unicellular organism like every other animal or plant. In tracing the actual continuity of the protoplasm from generation to generation, modern biology but reiterates the very, very ancient wisdom that "the individual is but a passing eddy in the flow, which vanishes and leaves no trace, while the general stream of life goes forward."

MORRIS R. COHEN.

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# Modernity

*Inner Circle, by Ethel Colburn Mayne. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.*

*Bring! Bring! and Other Stories, by Conrad Aiken. New York: Boni and Liveright. $2.50.*

THESE two groups of stories are in striking and singular counterpart. It is as if they had been written in a kind of antiphonal collaboration—the same themes, the same situations, directly developed or reversed, the same narrative method of casual contacts and associations, the same mood of groping consciousness gathering about matter of fact, trivial in itself but pregnant with significance. Miss Mayne's touch upon reality is delicate, reserved, withdrawing, feminine. Mr. Aiken's is harsh, robust, emphatic, masculine.

The major theme of both authors is sounded in the initial stories, resonantly, in full chords. Miss Mayne's The Latchkey is a story of complete misconception between man and woman, motived by a trivial object, the symbol of emancipation and invitation. It is a comedy in which male fastidiousness betrays itself into grossness, and the heroine is left, bruised in that self-esteem that depends on the opinion of others, but indomitable in her inner self.

> There was a place for her truth too. This man had seen what such as he could see. It had been there for him to see; the sense of him came back too vividly for Frederica to refuse its testimony. But there was all the rest of her! Courage for both—for both.

Mr. Aiken's Miss Rooker in Bring! Bring! is of coarser stuff, and meets her like in the husband of her invalid charge.

> She turned on the landing to look down at him. He smiled, his humorous eyes twinkling, and she smiled in return. . . . Heavens! how extraordinary, how simply extraordinary, how perfectly extraordinary. She stared at her reflection in the glass. "Naughty" eyes? No—they were beautiful. She had never looked so beautiful, never. . . . Perhaps he would knock at her door? She locked it. . . . She combed her hair, and as she did so began humming, *"And—when—I—told—them."* Then she remembered Mrs. Oldkirk in the next room, and stopped. Poor old thing! . . . Mr. Oldkirk passed along the hall. . . . Ah, the nice tall man with nice eyes, the very, very nice man! . . .

The other stories of both collections sound in clearer, simpler, more attenuated form the theme of the self made manifest through loneliness. Miss Mayne's Campaign is a story of illness invading a home with nurses and doctors. It is like a modern war story in that the man in the trenches never appears. It is his sister, the non-combatant behind the lines, who suffers in her outraged privacy, and dislocated life. In Still Life, Dialogue in a Cab, and Franklin's Problem Miss Mayne deals with affinities verging on passion, unrevealed, (in the last two stories unsuspected), until some sudden jolt shakes the saturate solution into crystallization. Mr. Aiken's The Disciple is a variant of the legend of the Wandering Jew. The Letter is a translation from oral into written speech of the cry of the lonely student on the Harvard campus who used to shout his name, Reinhart, under his windows, to give himself the illusion that someone wanted him. Hey Taxi, The Anniversary and Smith and Jones are stories of violent effort to break the bounds of the prison which confines the soul and sickens it. Escape from Fatuity, like Sherwood Anderson's I'm a Fool, is a story of a man's failure to approach another being; and Soliloquy on a Park Bench is the same situation seen by the woman.

At times the stories in the two sets form unmistakable pairs. Miss Mayne's Shirt of Nessus and Mr. Aiken's By My Troth, Nerissa, both deal with the aspect of loneliness which comes from satiety. The Picnic and Strange Moonlight both catch the eerie effect of childhood imagination playing upon experience. In these again the difference between masculine and feminine treatment is exquisitely illustrated. The Picnic is a rendering of Little Girl Lost. Rosamund had left Miss Crichton and the other children to pick a blue flower growing high upon a grassy ledge, and when she scrambled back down the bank, she found the little lane quite empty. She saw a cottage in a field but when she went near, it looked as if it did not want her to be there. Suddenly she saw Miss Crichton and the other children and they went back to where the rest of the party were packing up the baskets. But there was still something unhappy about it all. They said she hadn't been lost; but she must have been, or "how could she know the way things looked when you were?" Strange Moonlight is the story of a week in a boy's life—a tremendous week, colossal. Its culminating event is the death of a girl whom he has seen but once, a little girl learning her letters from a book, asking him, "What's this?" and clasping beads about her neck and saying, "Now I'm an Egyptian," —like Monica with her cup of chocolate in Francis Thompson's poem.

> How was it possible for anyone, whom one actually knew, *to die?* . . . "And what's this?" she had said, and "Now I'm an Egyptian!" . . . What was death that could put an end to a clear voice saying such things?

Strange Moonlight is an example of Mr. Aiken's gift for presenting the web of the imagination shot through with notes of reality. The Dark City is another, and The Orange Moth a third. This device gives Mr. Aiken an opportunity of practicing his literary virtuosity. He breaks rare and subtle rhythms with strident colloquialism. He has the Harvard trick of parody which he uses indiscreetly. He jazzes De Quincey and Pater and other eminent stylists. In The Orange Moth a young man is reading De Quincey and writing of beauty. His name is Cooke; his room is on Twenty-third Street near Ninth Avenue; from his window he sees a girl emerging from a latticed door with a pail of beer. His neighbor, Flodden, gives him the recipe of successful writing.

> Take one sweet, tired gingham wife in a Long Island village; one successful climbing husband who wants to build him more stately mansions O my soul but finds his wife still feeding the chickens—come, chick come, chick!—add one deep-eyed chorus girl recuperating in the country from housemaid's knee. Stir till thick. Separate them. Sprinkle with Belasco sauce. And there you are.

One may find this cheap and trivial, in contrast with Miss Mayne's inveterate good taste, but it cannot be denied that Mr. Aiken retains his artistic seriousness through his integral conception of life of which this humor is a pathetic part. There is a devilish je m'en fichism about such pas-

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sages that eats into the marrow of existence more powerfully, more corrosively, than the most considered pessimism. The Last Visit takes a young Jewish woman to Watertown, Mass., to visit her dying grandmother, and back to Boston to meet her lover. As she sits with him in the darkness of a moving picture theatre, his fingers in the opening of her glove,

> a delicious feeling of weakness, dissolution came over her. Life suddenly seemed to her extraordinarily complex, beautiful and miserable. By the waters of Watertown we sat down and wept, yea, we wept when we remembered Boston.

It is evident that these two groups of stories have in them something of Katherine Mansfield, something of Arthur Machen, something of Sherwood Anderson, something of James Joyce. They have more of Miss Mayne and Mr. Aiken. Together they are a summary of the modern tendency in short fiction—and each is a contribution to it.

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT.

# The Newspaper's Conscience

*The Conscience of the Newspaper, by Leon Nelson Flint. New York: D. Appleton and Company. 470 pages. $3.*

IS THE American newspaper, having had the errors of its ways pointed out with annoying frequency, trying to lead a better life? Is it developing anything like a professional conscience? This is the problem to which Leon Nelson Flint, professor of journalism in the University of Kansas, has addressed himself in a volume of some four hundred and seventy informative but rather undigested pages. Mr. Flint has endeavored to ascertain, with much help from actual "cases," how editors behave when confronted with questions of right and wrong, as well as to assail the far more difficult question of what right and wrong in journalism really are. He has done a heroic job, and has collected a mass of extremely useful material.

Mr. Flint is not much of a generalizer, and his book is on that account inconclusive. Perhaps, however, there has been enough generalizing about newspapers. "When the principles of fairness, independence, accuracy, service and the rest are presented to the inexperienced man entering journalism," says Mr. Flint, "he has no hesitancy in accepting them. But as abstractions such virtues are almost meaningless." How painfully true this is anyone may ascertain for himself by comparing the "codes" of certain newspapers and organizations, many of which Mr. Flint quotes, with the actual conduct of the press. The Hearst editors are instructed to "omit things that will offend nice people," the Sacramento Bee "fears far more to do injustice to the poorest beggar than to clash swords with wealthy injustice," the Philadelphia Public Ledger holds that "the public welfare has higher claims than any party cry," and a splendid code, written by a committee headed by H. J. Wright, the distinguished editor of the late New York Globe, and adopted by the National Association of Newspaper Editors, declares that "freedom from all obligations except that of fidelity to the public interest is vital." But all this does not sound exactly like a description of journalism. It resembles journalism about as much as the conduct of any baker's dozen of professing Christians picked up in front of a Fifth Avenue church on Easter Sunday resembles the Sermon on the Mount.

Mr. Flint is well aware of this, though sometimes he seems less well aware of it than at other times. His services in this book consist in an attempt to summarize, on the one hand, some of the ideals and pretensions of journalism and, on the other hand, to examine its actual conduct in particular emergencies. There is first the question of plain accuracy. On this score the newspapers are probably improving. Lee A. White found that on his own newspaper, the Detroit News, "only one error was made to every 3,250 opportunities." But accuracy is technical, not ethical. As Kent Cooper, the new general manager of the Associated Press, recently remarked, "it is the truth in the news that makes the news and therefore produces a salable article for the publisher." The New York World's Bureau of Accuracy and Fair Play is a good example of a policy that adds perceptibly to the good will, and hence to the capital value of a newspaper. The deliberate hoax or fake is on the decline because it does not pay. For Twentieth Century journalism, whatever else its failings, must pay.

Distortion of the news by means of emphasizing or omitting some of the facts is harder both to avoid and to detect. Every reporter does it to some extent (I am doubtless doing it at this moment in reporting Mr. Flint's book); and of course it occurs most frequently when a news story has a bearing on a paper's policy. The Commission of Inquiry of the Interchurch World Movement found, as Mr. Flint reminds us, that the press of Pittsburgh and its vicinity failed to give an unbiased account of the steel strike of 1919. Of course it did. The Pittsburgh editors did not want the strikers to win. They probably thought they ought not to win. No editor, of course, will frankly defend misrepresentation, but many, of all varieties of opinion, will defend "color," or, to give it a more resounding title, "interpretative journalism." It is easy to agree with one of Mr. Flint's anonymous informants that the use of "color" is increasing. The ethical question here would seem to lie in whether the reader is warned or not. If he knows there is alum or benzoate of soda in his news it thereby becomes innocuous as far as he is concerned. But he doesn't always know. And if all his news is uniformly colored, as it certainly is in many cities where the processes of newspaper consolidation have gone far, he may think that the only normal hue.

What "color" is to a news article, selection, with its necessary suppression of some items, is for the paper as a whole. Some suppression, it is agreed, there must be. Certain facts simply cannot be talked about in print. Others ought not to be. Still others—details of crimes and criminal trials among them—are on the border line. Most of Mr. Flint's authorities are against punishing individuals by unnecessary publicity unless there is a public interest to be served. They are, however, their own judges of what constitutes a public interest. More serious, from a social point of view, are those suppressions designed to protect a private interest—an advertiser, a business associate, or "business" in general, by which is meant, as a rule, that part of the community which has goods to sell, as opposed to that which works for wages or salaries. This sort of suppression can be damagingly one-sided. Thus Mr. Flint quotes, without comment, a code produced by the Citizens' Protective League of Denver calling upon the newspapers to suppress "stories which, though having some basis of fact, might be hurtful to Colorado or to any city in Colorado." It is easy to see whose bread would be buttered by rules of that sort. In one of Mr. Flint's "cases" a certain newspaper was persuaded not to hurt its home town by publishing the facts

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about a polluted water supply. The realtors enjoyed a temporary prosperity, perhaps, but an epidemic of typhoid followed, with deaths which timely publicity might have prevented. "Don't hurt the town" is a cry that has silenced many an editor, especially in the smaller communities. Yet it is nearly always a cry, not of the public, but of an interested minority.

Propaganda, that overgrown infant of the World War, is the opposite of suppression; it is not always an invention of facts, but it is usually a distortion or overemphasizing of facts. And if editors nowadays are less likely than their predecessors to kill important news in order to please a friend or placate a patron, they are more than ever exposed to the wiles of the propagandist, whose skill has become positively amazing. Thus even an editor who is absolutely free and who has no purpose but to serve his fellows can err in several ways. He or his reporters may be misinformed, or incompletely informed, or accidentally inaccurate, or unconsciously biased, or possessed of poor judgment. Some of these sources of journalistic weakness can be, and are being, repaired. As the mechanical perfection of publishing increases, reporters are more carefully trained (often in just such schools of journalism as that over which Mr. Flint capably presides) and they are consequently more responsible, more reliable and more competent. They also, as Mr. Flint shows, go to their work with some notion of the ethical perplexities which it involves. Professional standards begin to reveal themselves not only among the young reporters but among editors. The number of things no journalist can do without losing the respect of his fellows is increasing. There are so few avowed blackguards in American editorial chairs nowadays that they are viewed with a certain tolerance, as being picturesque relics of a fast-fading age.

This development is cheering to Mr. Flint, as it is to most of us. It is probably part of the general leveling up of the standards of American business. Pirates, claim-jumpers, squatters, rustlers and bad men no longer flourish. Business is falling into the hands of those who will conform to the usages of a capitalistic civilization which is now, superficially, at least, rather urbane; at any rate one may go so far as to say that the Marquis of Queensbury rules have been substituted for the rough and tumble of the London Prize Ring. But the primary object of business is to earn profits, and newspaper-making is more than ever a business. If decency, accuracy and gentlemanly conduct earn profits (and, to the credit of the human race, they sometimes do) newspapers will tend in that direction. But as editors are more and more the entrepreneur's hired men journalism cannot help having a fundamental bias in favor of those individuals and groups who own things. We should not expect anything else, for our society is, as Mr. Flint pertinently states, "capitalistic, not socialistic nor communistic." The public may share this bias to the full extent, or it may not; more likely it will never know the difference; but in any case it will take what it can get. Of course the danger is, not that the press will fail to advocate socialism or communism or some other panacea, but that it will incline toward a rigid conservatism. But this is only another way of saying that the impulse toward progress, in so far as it may come to involve some change in the status of ownership, will have to find some other outlet.

It is a strange and solemn thought that as honesty and efficiency become common in journalism the intellectual adventurousness of the profession passes out. The newspaper editors of the future will be great organizers, perhaps, but not teachers or leaders. They will follow in the ranks with the garage men and grocers. We can comfort ourselves, however, with the reflection that there will be a decreasing amount of lead in their gasoline, and of sand in their sugar.

R. L. DUFFUS.

# Cato from Norway

*Segelfoss Town, by Knut Hamsun. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50.*

IN Children of the Age Lieutenant Willatz Holmsen was indubitably a hero, wielding his walking-stick as bravely as a sceptre. In Segelfoss Town his son and heir to the curtailed manor is no domestic king. Like Tonio Kroger and the last of the Buddenbrooks, Willatz Holmsen IV is a musician. His personality, vaguely outlined, offers no central pivot for plot. Here, in fact, Hamsun has omitted the device of a central character, and taken the community for his somewhat amorphous hero.

Segelfoss Town extends the record, begun in Children of the Age, of changes which modern industrialism works in a feudal community. The aristocrat has subsided; the captain of industry is already failing; merchant and politician rule the roost. Power accrues to men who can tickle the taste of a semi-urban mob aware of its strength but not of its flabbiness: this is Hamsun's picture of democracy. The pastoral virtues have been abandoned and petty vice is rampant. Love of little luxuries has replaced the love of labor. Like the old Roman mob, this group of unwilling workers must be courted with fêtes and entertainments. Evidently the author does not relish the state of affairs, and satirically suggests his disapproval in 368 pages of realistic detail. This volume, written immediately before The Growth of the Soil, is carried into foreign parts on the strength of its successor. It is looser in structure, and less explicit in conveying the same thesis, namely, that contentment and the fear of God live only in contact with the land.

ROSE LEE.

## Contributors

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